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THE
POWER of RELIGION

K ON THE
M I N D,
IN

RETIREMENT, SICKNESS,

AND AT
D E A T H;

EXEMPLIFIED IN THE
TESTIMONIES and EXPERIENCE

Of MEN distinguished by their
GREATNESS, LEARNING,
OR
V I R T U E.

THE SECOND EDITION.

Y O R K:

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following small Collection was made, and is now produced, with a view to excite serious reflections on the unsatisfying and transitory nature of temporal enjoyments; and to promote a fervent concern for the attainment of that felicity which will be sure, complete, and permanent.

Piety and virtue, when abstractedly considered, are truly amiable, and appear worthy of our earnest pursuit; but, when recommended by the lives and testimonies of eminent persons, who have known the world, and experienced the empti-

ness of its honours, wealth, and pleasures, they derive additional weight, and constrain us to acknowledge, that indeed it is our greatest happiness to be religious.

It is one of the many favours which a wise and gracious Providence hath conferred upon mankind, that in every country, and perhaps in almost every district throughout the earth, he has stationed some of his faithful servants, or returning prodigals, as witnesses of his power and goodness, and as encouragers to a life of true humility, gratitude, and beneficence.

The following pages exhibit a few of those striking examples, which, in the quiet hour of reflec-

tion, may contribute to arrest the careless and wandering, to animate the sincere and concerned, and to convince or discountenance those, whose vain pleasurable lives have inclined them to oppose the highest truths, and to forsake the Fountain of all their blessings.

May the consideration of these instances lead us to serious and timely reflections on our own condition, and to a profitable communion with the greatest and best of Beings, our divine and unerring Monitor; by which we shall experience a growing concern, that the end of our existence may be fully answered, and the favour of an Almighty

Friend secured. May his gracious protection be witnessed at the close of our day, when the shadows of the evening shall approach, the glittering vanities of the world be obscured, and all its friendships and resources unavailing.

In that awful hour, this great support will not only preserve us from being distressed with mournful retrospects on the past, or with gloomy apprehensions of what is to come, but will afford the truest consolation of mind, and enable us to look forward, with animating hopes, toward those happy regions of peace and joy, which shall then be allotted for our perpetual inheritance.

C O N T E N T S.

Solomon.—Ignatius.—Justin Martyr:
Emperor Charles the Fifth.—Cardinal
Wolfey.—Philip Sidney.—Secretary
Walsingham.—John Mason.—Wal-
ter Raleigh.—Louis Duke of Orleans.
——Henry Wotton.—Christopher
Hatton.—Great Duke of Mont-
morency.—Philip the Third, King
of Spain.—Gondamor, the King of
Spain's Ambassador.—Cardinal Rich-
lieu.—Cardinal Mazarine.—Tho-
mas Smith, Secretary of State.—Ox-
enstiern, Chancellor of Sweden.—Doc-
tor Donne.—Selden.—Grotius.
——Salmatius.—A. Rivetus.—
Francis Junius.—Henry Vane.—
Admiral Penn.—Howard.—Prin-
cess Elizabeth.—Bulstrode Whitlock.
——Anthony Lowther.—Earl of

C O N T E N T S.

Essex.——Robert Boyle.——Isaac
Newton.——John Locke.——Joseph
Addison.——Henry, Prince of Wales.
——Earl of Rochester.——James Her-
vey.——Lord Harrington.——Vil-
liers, Duke of Buckingham.——Col.
Gardiner.——Duncan Forbes, President
of Scotland.——Chief Justice Hale.——
Earl of Marlborough.——Conclusion.

T H E

POWER of RELIGION, &c.

THE wise KING SOLOMON,
who, at one season of his
life, had flattered himself
with great enjoyments from the
world; and who, better than
most men, could compute their
amount, gives us the result of his
experience in these memorable
lines ‘ I said in my heart, I will
‘ prove thee with mirth, therefore
‘ enjoy pleasure: and behold, this
‘ also is vanity. I said of laugh-
‘ ter, it is mad; and of mirth,
‘ what doth it? I made me great

' works, builded houses, planted
 ' vineyards, made gardens and
 ' orchards, planted trees in them
 ' of all kind of fruit; I got me
 ' servants and maidens, also great
 ' possessions: I gathered me silver
 ' and gold, and the peculiar trea-
 ' sures of kings and provinces;
 ' also men and women singers,
 ' and the delights of the sons of
 ' men, as musical instruments,
 ' and that of all sorts. So I was
 ' great, and increased more than
 ' all that were before me in
 ' Jerusalem, and whatsoever mine
 ' eyes desired, I kept not from
 ' them: I with-held not mine
 ' heart from any joy. Then I
 ' looked on the works which my

‘ hands had wrought, and behold,
‘ all was vanity and vexation of
‘ spirit.’ The reason he gives in
the 18th and 19th verses is, ‘ That
‘ the time of enjoying them was
‘ very short, and it was uncertain
‘ who should be benefited by
‘ them when he was gone.’
Wherefore he concludes all with,
‘ Fear God and keep his com-
‘ mandments, for this is the
‘ whole duty of man: for God
‘ shall bring every work into
‘ judgment, whether it be good,
‘ or whether it be evil.’

IGNATIUS, who lived within
the first hundred years after

Christ, (and who was torn in pieces of wild beasts at Rome, for his true faith in Jesus) left this saying, amongst other things, behind him: 'There is nothing better than the peace of a good conscience:' intimating, there might be a peace to wicked consciences, that are past feeling any thing to be evil, but swallowed up in the wickedness of the world. And in his epistle to the churches at Ephesus, Magnesia, Trallis, and Rome, upon his martyrdom, he says, 'Now I begin to be a disciple, I weigh neither visible nor invisible things, so that I may gain Christ.'

JUSTIN MARTYR, a philosopher, who received Christianity five and twenty years after the death of Ignatius declares in the relation of his conversion to the Christian faith, ‘ That the
 ‘ power of godliness in a plain,
 ‘ simple Christian, had that influence and operation on his soul,
 ‘ that he could not but betake
 ‘ himself to a serious and strict
 ‘ life:’ and yet, before, he was a Cynick, a rigid sect : and it gave him joy at his martyrdom, that he had spent his days as a serious teacher, and a good example. Eusebius relates of him ‘ That tho’
 ‘ he was also a follower of Plato’s

‘ doctrine, yet, when he saw the
‘ Christians piety and courage,
‘ he concluded, No people so tem-
‘ perate, less voluptuous, and more
‘ set on divine things;’ which first
induced him to become a Christian.

CHARLES V. Emperor of Germany, King of Spain and Lord of the Netherlands, after three and twenty pitched fields, six triumphs, four kingdoms conquered, and eight principalities added to his dominions, (a greater instance than whom can scarce be given) resigned up all his pomp to other hands, and betook himself to a retirement; leaving this

testimony behind him, concerning the life he spent in the honours and pleasures of the world, and that little time of his retreat from them all; 'That the sincere study, ' profession, and practice, of the ' Christian religion, had in it such ' joys and sweetness, as courts ' were strangers to.'

CARDINAL WOLSEY, the most absolute and wealthy Minister of State this kingdom ever had, and who in his time seemed to govern Europe as well as England, when come to the period of his life, left the world with this close reflection.

upon himself: ‘ Had I been as
 ‘ diligent to serve my God, as I
 ‘ I have been to please my king,
 ‘ he would not have left me now
 ‘ in my grey hairs.’ A dismal
 reflection for all wordly-minded
 men; but for those more especially,
 who have the power and means
 of doing more than ordinary good
 in the world, and do it not, which
 seems to have been the case and
 reflection of this great man.

PHILIP SIDNEY, a subject in-
 deed of England, but it is said
 chosen King of Poland, whom
 Queen Elizabeth, called her Philip;
 the Prince of Orange, his master;

whose friendship the Lord Brooks was so proud of, that he would have it part of his epitaph ‘ Here
 ‘ lies Sir Philip Sidney’s friend ;’
 whose death was lamented in verse by the then Kings of France and Scotland, and the two universities of England; repented so much at his death, of that witty vanity of his life, his Arcadia, that, to prevent the unlawful kindling of heats in others, he would have committed it to the flames himself. He left this farewell amongst his friends: ‘ Love my memory, cherish my friends; their faith to me
 ‘ may assure you that they are
 ‘ honest; but above all, govern

‘ your wills and affections by the
 ‘ will and word of your Creator.
 ‘ In me behold the end of this
 ‘ world, and all its vanities.’ And
 indeed, he was not much out in
 saying so, since in him was to be
 seen the end of all natural parts,
 acquired learning, and civil accom-
 plishments. His farewel seems
 spoken without terror, with a clear
 sense, and equal judgment.

SECRETARY WALSINGHAM,
 an extraordinary man in Queen
 Elizabeth’s time, towards the con-
 clusion of his days, in a letter to
 his Fellow-Secretary Burleigh,
 then Lord-Treasurer of England,
 writes thus : ‘ We have lived

' enough to our country, our for-
 ' tunes, our sovereign : it is high
 ' time we begin to live to our-
 ' selves, and to our God.' Which
 giving occasion for some court-
 droll to visit, and try to divert him,
 ' Ah !' said he, ' while we laugh,
 ' all things are serious round about
 ' us; God is serious when he pre-
 ' serveth us, and hath patience to-
 ' wards us; Christ is serious when
 ' he dieth for us; the Holy Ghost
 ' is serious when he striveth with
 ' us; the whole creation is serious
 ' in serving God and us: they
 ' are serious in hell and in hea-
 ' ven; and shall a man that hath
 ' one foot in his grave, jest and
 ' laugh?'

A strong testimony to the superior excellency of religion, and to the vanity and emptiness of worldly enjoyments, is given by JOHN MASON, who, tho' but 63 years old at his death, yet had flourished in the reigns of four princes, (Henry VIII. Edward VI. Queens Mary and Elizabeth) had been Privy-Counsellor to them all, and an eye-witness of the various revolutions and vicissitudes of those times. Towards his latter end, being on his death-bed, he spoke thus to those about him, ' I have
 ' lived to see five Princes, and have
 ' been Privy-Counsellor to four of
 ' them. I have seen the most remarkable things in foreign parts,

‘ and have been present at most
 ‘ state transactions for thirty years
 ‘ together ; and I have learned this
 ‘ after so many years experience ;
 ‘ That seriousness is the greatest
 ‘ wisdom, temperance the best phy-
 ‘ sic, and a good conscience the best
 ‘ estate ; and were I to live again,
 ‘ I would change the court for a
 ‘ cloister, my Privy-Counsellor’s
 ‘ bustle for an Hermit’s retire-
 ‘ ment, and the whole life I have
 ‘ lived in the palace for an hour’s
 ‘ enjoyment of God in the chapel.

‘ All things else forsake me,
 ‘ besides my God, my duty, and
 ‘ my prayers.’

WALTER RALEIGH is an eminent instance, being as extraordinary a man as this nation hath produced : in his person, well descended ; of health, strength, and a masculine beauty ; in understanding, quick ; in judgment, sound ; learned and wise, valiant and skilful ; an historian, a philosopher, a general, a statesman. After a long life, full of experience, he drops these excellent sayings, a little before his death, to his son, to his wife, and to the world, viz. ‘ Exceed not in the
 ‘ humour of rags and bravery ; for
 ‘ these will soon wear out of
 ‘ fashion, and no man is esteemed
 ‘ for gay garments, but by fools.

‘ On the other side, seek not riches
 ‘ basely, nor attain them by evil
 ‘ means: destroy no man for his
 ‘ wealth, nor take any thing from
 ‘ the poor; for the cry thereof
 ‘ will pierce the heavens: and it
 ‘ is most detestable before God,
 ‘ and most dishonourable before
 ‘ worthy men, to wrest any thing
 ‘ from the needy and labouring
 ‘ soul: God will never prosper
 ‘ thee, if thou offendest therein;
 ‘ but use thy poor neighbours and
 ‘ tenants well.’ A most worthy
 saying. But he adds, ‘ Have com-
 ‘ passion on the poor and afflicted,
 ‘ and God will bless thee for it:
 ‘ make not the hungry soul for-
 ‘ rowful; for if he curse thee in

' the bitterness of his soul, his
 ' prayer shall be heard of him that
 ' made him. Now, for the world,
 ' dear child, I know it too well to
 ' persuade thee to dive into the
 ' practices of it; rather stand upon
 ' thy own guard against all those
 ' that tempt thee to it, or may prac-
 ' tise upon thee, whether in thy
 ' conscience, thy reputation, or thy
 ' estate. Resolve that no man is
 ' wise or safe, but he that is honest.
 ' Serve God; let him be the au-
 ' thor of all thy actions; com-
 ' mend all thy endeavours to him
 ' that must either wither or prof-
 ' per them: please him with
 ' prayer; lest if he frown, he con-
 ' found all thy fortune and la-

‘ bour, like the drops of rain
‘ upon the sandy ground. Let my
‘ experienced advice and fatherly
‘ instructions sink deep into thy
‘ heart : so God direct thee in all
‘ thy ways, and fill thy heart with
‘ his grace.’

WALTER RALEIGH’S LETTER
to his WIFE,

After his CONDEMNATION.

YOU shall receive, my dear
wife, my last words, in
these my last lines. My love I
send you ; that you may keep
when I am dead ; and my coun-
sel, that you may remember it

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when I am no more. I would not, with my will, present you sorrows, dear wife; let them go to the grave with me, and be buried in the dust: and, seeing that it is not the will of God that I shall see you any more, bear my destruction patiently, and with an heart like yourself. First, I send you all the thanks which my heart can conceive, or my words express, for your many travails and cares for me; which, though they have not taken effect, as you wished, yet my debt to you is not the less; but pay it I never shall in this world. Secondly, I beseech you, for the love you bear me living, that you do not hide

yourself many days; but by your travails seek to help my miserable fortunes, and the right of your poor child : your mourning cannot avail me who am but dust. Thirdly, you shall understand, that my lands were conveyed, *bona fide*, to my child; the writings were drawn at Midsummer was a twelvemonth, as divers can witness; and I trust my blood will quench their malice who desired my slaughter, that they will not seek to kill you and your's with extreme poverty. To what friend to direct you, I know not, for all mine have left me in the true time of trial: most sorry am I,

that, being surprized by death, I can leave you no better estate; God hath prevented all my determinations; that great God, which worketh all in all. If you can live free from want, care for no more, for the rest is but a vanity. Love God, and begin betimes; in him shall you find true, everlasting, and endless comfort: when you have travailed and wearied yourself with all sorts of wordly cogitations, you shall sit down by sorrow in the end. Teach your son also to serve and fear God, whilst he is young, that the fear of God may grow up in him; then will God be an husband to you, and a father to him; an hus-

band and a father that can never be taken from you. Dear wife, I beseech you, for my soul's sake, pay all poor men. When I am dead, no doubt but you will be much sought unto; for the world thinks I was very rich: have a care of the fair pretences of men; for no greater misery can befall you, in this life, than to become a prey unto the world, and after to be despised. As for me, I am no more your's, nor you mine: death has cut us asunder, and God hath divided me from the world, and you from me. Remember your poor child, for his father's sake, who loved you in his happiest

state. I sued for my life, but, God knows, it was for you and your's that I desired it: for know it, my dear wife, your child is the child of a true man, who in his own respect despiseth death, and his mishapen and ugly forms. I cannot write much; God knows how hardly I steal this time, when all are asleep: and it is also time for me to separate my thoughts from the world. Beg my dead body, which living was denied you; and either lay it in Sherborne, or in Exeter church, by my father and mother.

I can say no more; time and death call me away. The everlasting God, powerful, infinite,

and inscrutable ; God Almighty, who is goodness itself, the true light and life, keep you and yours, and have mercy upon me, and forgive my persecutors and false accusers, and send us to meet in his glorious kingdom. My dear wife, farewell ! bless my boy, pray for me, and let my true God hold you both in his arms.

Your's that was,

but not now mine own,

WALTER RALEIGH.

Behold wisdom, resolution, nature, and grace ! How strong in argument, wise in counsel, firm, affectionate, and devout. O that

heroes and politicians would make him their example in his death, as well as magnify the great actions of his life ! I doubt not, had he been to live over his days again, with his experience, he had made less noise, and yet done more good to the world and himself. It is a sad thing to consider, that men hardly come to know themselves, or the world, till they are ready to leave it.

LOUIS, the late Duke of Orleans, thus expressed the delight he found in piety and devotion. ' I know by experience, that sub-
' luntary grandeur and sublunary

‘ pleasure, are delusive and vain,
‘ and are always infinitely below
‘ the conceptions we form of
‘ them: but, on the contrary, such
‘ happiness, and such complacency
‘ may be found in devotion and
‘ piety, as the sensual mind has
‘ no idea of.’

HENRY WOTTON thought it
the greatest happiness of his life
‘ To be at leisure to be, and to
‘ do, good.’ Toward his end,
when he reflected on past times,
he was used to say, though a
man esteemed sober and learn-
ed, ‘ How much time have I to
‘ repent of, and how little to do
‘ it in!’

CHRISTOPHER HATTON, a little before his death, advised his relations to be serious in the search after ‘ The will of God in
 ‘ the holy word: for,’ said he,
 ‘ it is deservedly accounted a
 ‘ piece of excellent knowledge
 ‘ to understand the law of the
 ‘ land, and the customs of a man’s
 ‘ country; how much more so to
 ‘ know the statutes of heaven,
 ‘ and the laws of eternity, those
 ‘ immutable and eternal laws of
 ‘ justice and righteousness; to
 ‘ know the will and pleasure of
 ‘ the great Monarch, and univer-
 ‘ sal King of the world: ‘ I have
 ‘ seen an end of all perfection,

‘ but thy commandments, O
 ‘ God, are exceeding broad.’

Whatever other knowledge a man may be endued with, could he by a vast and penetrating mind, and an heart as large as the sand upon the sea-shore, command all the knowledge of art and nature, of words and things ; could he attain a mystery in all languages, and sound the depth of all arts and sciences ; could he discourse of the interest of all states, the intrigues of all courts, the reason of all civil laws and constitutions, and give an account of all histories : and yet not know the author of his being, and the preserver of his life, his sovereign, and his

judge; his surest refuge & trouble;
 his best friend, or worst enemy;
 the support of his life, and the
 hope of his death; his future
 happiness, and his portion for
 ever; he doth but, with a great
 deal of wisdom, go down to de-
 struction.

The great Duke of MONTMO-
 RENCY, colleague to the Duke of
 Orleans, brother to the French
 King, Lewis the XIIIth, in the
 war by them agitated against the
 ministry of Cardinal Richlieu,
 being taken and convicted at
 Lyons, a little before his behead-
 ing, looking upon himself then

very richly attired; ‘ Ah!’ says he, ‘ this becomes not a servant of the crucified Jesus! What do I with these vanities about me? He was poor, despised, and naked, when he went to the cross to die for my sins:’ and immediately he stripped himself of all his finery, and put a more grave and modest garment on him: a serious reflection, at a time when he best knew what was best.

PHILIP the THIRD, King of Spain, seriously reflecting upon the life he had lived, cried out

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upon his death-bed; ‘ Ah! how
 ‘ happy were I, had I spent these
 ‘ twenty-three years, that I have
 ‘ held my kingdom, in a retire-
 ‘ ment.’ Declaring to his con-
 fessor, ‘ My concern is for my
 ‘ soul, not my body. I lay all
 ‘ that God has given me, my do-
 ‘ minion, power, and my life, at
 ‘ the feet of Jesus Christ my Sa-
 ‘ viour.’

GONDAMOR, Ambassador in
 England to that King, and held
 the ablest man of his time, took
 great freedom as to his reli-
 gion, in his politics, serving his
 ends by those ways that would

best accomplish them. Towards his latter end, he grew very thoughtful of his past life, and after all his negotiations and successes in business, said to one of his friends, 'I fear nothing in the world more than sin;' often declaring, 'He had rather endure hell than sin;' so clear and strong were his convictions, and so exceeding sinful did sin appear to him, upon a serious consideration of his ways.

CARDINAL RICHLIEU, after he had given law to all Europe for many years, confessed to Old

Peter de Moulin, the famous Protestant of that country, ‘ That, ‘ being forced upon many irregularities, by that which they ‘ call reason of state, he could not ‘ tell how to satisfy his conscience ‘ for several things, and therefore had many temptations to ‘ doubt and disbelieve a God, ‘ another world, and the immortality of the soul, and thereby ‘ relieve his mind from any ‘ disquiet, but in vain; so strong,’ he said, ‘ was the notion of God ‘ on his soul, so clear the impression of him upon the frame ‘ of the world, so unanimous the ‘ consent of mankind, so powerful the convictions of his own

‘ conscience, that he could not
 ‘ but taste the power of the world
 ‘ to come, and so live as one that
 ‘ must die, and so die as one that
 ‘ must live for ever.’ And being
 asked one day, ‘ Why he was
 ‘ so sad ?’ he answered, ‘ The
 ‘ soul is a serious thing ; it must
 ‘ be either sad here for a moment,
 ‘ or be sad for ever.’

CARDINAL MAZARINE was
 reputed the cunningest statesman
 of his time, and gave great proofs
 of it in the successes of the French
 crown, under his ministry: his
 aim was the grandeur of the

world, to which he made all other considerations submit: but, poor man! he was of another mind a little before his death: for being awakened by the smart lashes of conscience, which represented his soul's condition to be very dismal, with astonishment and tears he cried out, ' O my poor soul, what will become of thee! Whither wilt thou go?' And spake one day thus to the Queen Mother of France; ' Madam, your favours have undone me: were I to live again, I would be a capuchin, rather than a courtier.'

THOMAS SMITH, Secretary of State to Queen Elizabeth, a quarter of a year before his death, sent to his friends, the Bishops of Winchester and Worcester, and intreated them to draw him, out of the word of God, the plainest and exactest way of making his peace with him; adding, ‘That
 ‘it was great pity, men considered not to what end they
 ‘were born into the world, till
 ‘they were ready to go out of it.’

OXENSTIERN, Chancellor of Swedeland, was a person of the first quality, station and ability in his own country; and his share

and success, not only in the chief ministry of affairs in that kingdom, but in the greatest negotiations of Europe, during his time, made him no less considerable abroad. After all his knowledge and honour, being visited in his retreat from public business, by Commissioner Whitlock, Ambassador from England to Queen Christiana, in the conclusion of their discourse, he said to the Ambassador, ‘I have seen much
 ‘and enjoyed much of this world,
 ‘but I never knew how to live
 ‘till now. I thank my good
 ‘God that has given me time to
 ‘know him, and to know my-
 ‘self. All the comfort I have,

‘ and which is more than the
‘ whole world can give, is—feel-
‘ ing the good Spirit of God in
‘ my heart, and reading in this
‘ good book,’ holding up the
bible, ‘ that came from it.’ And
further addressed himself thus
to the Ambassador: ‘ You are now
‘ in the prime of your age and
‘ vigour, and in great favour
‘ and business; but this will all
‘ leave you, and you will one
‘ day better understand and relish
‘ what I say to you; and then
‘ you will find that there is more
‘ wisdom, truth, comfort, and
‘ pleasure, in retiring and turning
‘ your heart from the world, to
‘ the good Spirit of God, and in

‘ reading the bible, than in all
 ‘ the courts and favours of prin-
 ‘ ces.’ This I had, as near as
 I am able to remember, from the
 Ambassador’s own mouth, more
 than once. A very edifying
 history, when we consider from
 whom it came; one of the great-
 est and wisest men of his age,
 while his understanding was as
 sound and vigorous, as his ex-
 perience and knowledge were
 great.

W. PENN.

DOCTOR DONNE, a person of
 great parts and learning, being
 upon his death-bed, and taking

his solemn farewell of his friends, made this weighty declaration to them: 'I repent of all my life, but that part of it I spent in communion with God, and in doing good.'

SELDEN, one of the greatest scholars and antiquaries of his time, and one who had taken a diligent survey of what knowledge was considerable amongst the Jews, Heathens, and Christians; at last, toward the end of his days, in a conference with Bishop Usher, declared, 'That notwithstanding he had been so laborious in his enqui-

'ries, and curious in his collec-
 'tions, and had possess himself
 'of a treasure of books and
 'manuscripts upon all ancient
 'subjects; yet he could rest his
 'soul on none, save the scrip-
 'tures: and above all, that pas-
 sage lay most remarkably upon
 his spirit, Titus ii. 11, 12, 13, 14,
 15. "For the grace of God, that
 "bringeth salvation, hath appear-
 "ed unto all men; teaching us,
 "that denying ungodliness and
 "worldly lusts, we should live
 "soberly, righteously, and godly
 "in this present world; looking
 "for that blessed hope and glori-
 "ous appearing of the great God,
 "and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

“ who gave himself for us, that he
 “ might redeem us from all ini-
 “ quity, and purify unto himself
 “ a peculiar people, zealous of
 “ good works: these things
 “ speak, and exhort, and rebuke
 “ with all authority.” And indeed,
 it is one of the most comprehen-
 sive passages in the scriptures; for
 it comprises the end, means, and
 recompence of Christianity.

HUGH GROTIUS is much ce-
 lebrated for his great learning and
 universal knowledge: ‘ a light,’
 say the statesmen; ‘ a light,’ say
 the churchmen too; witness his

Annals, and his book, *De Jure Belli et Pacis* ; also his *Christian Religion*, and elaborate *Commentaries*. After all, he winds up his life and choice in this remarkable saying ;
 ‘ I would give all my learning
 ‘ and honour for the plain integrity of John Urick, who was a
 ‘ religious poor man, that spent
 ‘ eight hours of his time in prayer,
 ‘ eight in labour, and but eight in
 ‘ meals, sleep, and other necessities.’ And to one that admired his great industry, he returned this by way of complaint : ‘ Ah !
 ‘ I have consumed my life, in labourously doing nothing.’ And to another, that enquired of his wisdom and learning, what course

to take—he solemnly answered,
 ‘ be serious.’

SALMASIUS, a famous French scholar, after his many volumes of learning, by which he had acquired great veneration among men of books, confessed that he had mistaken true learning, and that in which solid happiness consisted, and exclaimed thus against himself: ‘ Oh! I have lost
 ‘ a world of time; time that most
 ‘ precious thing in the world!
 ‘ whereof, had I but one year
 ‘ more, it should be spent in
 ‘ David’s psalms, and Paul’s epif-

‘ tles. Oh! Sirs,’ said he to those about him, ‘ mind the world less, ‘ and God more : “ The fear “ of the Lord, that is wisdom ; “ and to depart from evil, that “ is understanding.”

A. RIVETUS was a man of great understanding, and much revered in the Dutch nation. After a long life of study in search of divine knowledge, being on his death-bed, and conversed with upon heavenly things, he brake forth in this manner ; ‘ God has ‘ taught me more of himself in ten ‘ days sickness, than I could obtain ‘ by all my labour and studies.’

Plain and simple are the means to the knowledge of God and his holy will, when we come to be in earnest, and our hearts sincerely concerned to know and obey it; ‘ The wayfaring man, though a fool (in the world’s wisdom) shall not err therein.’

FRANCIS JUNIUS, an ingenious person, who hath writ his own life, as he was reading Tully de Legibus, fell into a persuasion, *Nilil curare Deum, nec sui, nec alieni*; till in a tumult at Lyons, the Lord wonderfully delivered him from imminent death; so

that he was forced to acknowledge a divine Providence therein : and his father hearing of the dangerous ways that his son was misled into, sent for him home, where he carefully and piously instructed him, and caused him to read over the New Testament ; of which himself writes thus ;
 ‘ When I opened the New Testa-
 ‘ ment, I first lighted upon John’s
 ‘ first chapter, “ In the beginning
 “ was the word, &c. ” I read part
 ‘ of the chapter, and was sud-
 ‘ denly convinced, that the divi-
 ‘ nity of the argument, and the
 ‘ majesty and authority of the
 ‘ writing, did very much excel
 ‘ all the eloquence of human

' writings : my body trembled,
 ' my mind was astonished, and
 ' was so affected all that day, that
 ' I knew not where and what I
 ' was. Thou wast mindful of
 ' me, O my God, according to
 ' the multitude of thy mercies,
 ' and calledst home thy lost sheep
 ' into the fold.' And, as Justin
 Martyr of old, so he of late de-
 clared, ' That the power of God-
 ' linefs in a plain, fimple Christi-
 ' an, wrought fo upon him, that
 ' he could not but take up a ftrict
 ' and a ferious life.'

HENRY VANE poffeffed abili-
 ties of the firft rate, and an ex-

tensive knowledge of mankind. In his youth, he was much addicted to company, and promised little to business; but reading a book, called The Signs of a Godly Man, and being convicted in himself that they were just, but that he had no share in any one of them, he fell into that extreme anguish and horror, that, for some days and nights, he took little food or rest, which at once dissolved his old friendships, and made those impressions and resolutions to religion, that neither university, courts, princes, nor parents, nor any losses or disappointments that threatened his new course of life, could weaken

or alter. And though this laid him under some disadvantages for a time, yet his great integrity and abilities broke through that obscurity; so that those of very different sentiments did not only admire, but very often desired him to accept the most eminent negociations of his country, which he served, according to his own principles, with great success, and a remarkable self-denial. This great man's maxim was, 'Religion is the best master, and the best friend; for it made men wise, and would never leave them, that never left it;' which he found true in himself: for as it made him wiser than

those that had been his teachers,
 so it made him firmer than any
 hero, having something more than
 nature to support him; which
 was the judgment, as well of
 foreigners, as of others, who had
 the curiosity to see him die.
 Making good some meditations of
 his own, viz. ‘ The day of death
 ‘ is the judge of all our other days;
 ‘ the very trial and touch-stone of
 ‘ the actions of our lives. It is
 ‘ the end that crowns the work,
 ‘ and a good death honoureth a
 ‘ man’s whole life. The fading
 ‘ corruption and loss of this life,
 ‘ is the passage into a better.
 ‘ Death is no less essential to us,
 ‘ than to live, or to be born. In

‘ flying death, thou fliest thyself;
‘ thy essence is equally parted into
‘ these two, life and death. It is
‘ no small reproach to a Christian,
‘ whose faith is in immortality,
‘ and the blessedness of another
‘ life, to fear death much, which
‘ is the necessary passage there-
‘ unto.’

ADMIRAL PENN, after thirty years employment in several places of eminent trust and honour, upon serious reflection, not long before his death, spoke to one of his sons in this manner:
‘ Son, William, I am weary of
‘ the world; I would not live over
‘ my days again, if I could com-

' mand them with a wish; for the
 ' snares of life are greater than
 ' the fears of death. This troubles
 me, that I have offended a gra-
 cious God, who has followed
 ' me to this day. O, have a care
 ' of sin! That is the sting both of
 ' life and death. Three things I
 ' commend to you : First, let no-
 ' thing in this world tempt you
 ' to wrong your conscience : I
 ' charge you, do nothing against
 ' your conscience; so will you
 ' keep peace at home, which will
 ' be a feast to you in the day of
 ' trouble. Secondly, whatever
 ' you design to do, lay it justly,
 ' and time it seasonably; for that
 ' gives security and dispatch.
 ' Lastly, be not troubled at dis

‘ appointments; for if they may
 ‘ be recovered, do it; if they can-
 ‘ not, trouble is vain. If you
 ‘ could not have helped it, be con-
 ‘ tent: there is often peace and
 ‘ profit in submitting to Provi-
 ‘ dence; for afflictions make wise.
 ‘ If you could have helped it,
 ‘ let not your trouble exceed in-
 ‘ struction for another time. These
 ‘ rules will carry you with firm-
 ‘ ness and comfort through this
 ‘ inconstant world.’

A noble young man of the family
 of HOWARD, having in health too
 much yielded to the temptations
 of youth, when laid upon a sick-

bed, which proved his dying-bed, fell under the power and agony of great convictions; he mightily bewailed himself in the remembrance of his former extravagancies; and cried strongly to God to forgive him, abhorring his former course, and promising amendment, if God renewed life to him. However, he was willing to die, having tasted of the love and forgiveness of God; and warned his acquaintance and kindred that came to see him, 'To fear God, and forsake the pleasures and vanity of this world:' and so willingly yielded his soul from the troubles of time, and frailties of mortality.

PRINCESS ELIZABETH of the Rhine, claims a memorial in this collection; her virtue giving greater lustre to her name, than her quality, which yet was of the greatest in the German empire. She chose a single life, as freest of care, and best suited to the study and meditation she was always inclined to : and the chief diversion she took, next the air, was in some such plain and housewifely entertainments, as knitting, &c. She had a small territory, which she governed so well, that she shewed herself fit for a greater. She would constantly, every last day in the week, sit in judgment, and hear and deter-

mine causes herself; where her patience, justice, and mercy, were admirable: frequently remitting her forfeitures, where the party was poor, or otherwise meritorious. And, which was excellent, though unusual, she would temper her discourses with religion, and strangely draw concerned parties to submission and agreement; exercising, not so much the rigour of her power, as the power of her persuasion. Her meekness and humility appeared to me extraordinary; she did not consider the quality, but the merit, of the people she entertained. Did she hear of a retired man, hid from the world, and seeking after the

knowledge of a better, she was sure to set him down in the catalogue of her charity, if he wanted it: I have casually seen, I believe, fifty tokens sealed and superscribed to the several poor subjects of her bounty, whose distances would not suffer them to know one another, though they knew her, whom yet some of them had never seen. Thus, though she kept no sumptuous table in her own court, she spread the tables of the poor in their solitary cells; breaking bread to virtuous pilgrims, according to their want, and her ability. Abstemious in herself, and in apparel void of all vain ornaments.

I must needs say, her mind had a noble prospect: her eye was to a better and more lasting inheritance than can be found below; which made her often despise the greatness of courts, and learning of the schools, of which she was an extraordinary judge. Being once at Hamburgh, a religious person, whom she went to see for religion's sake, telling her,

‘ It was too great an honour for
 ‘ him, that he should have a vi-
 ‘ sitant of her quality come under
 ‘ his roof, that was allied to so
 ‘ many great kings and princes
 ‘ of this world:’ she humbly answered, ‘ If they were godly, as
 ‘ well as great, it would be an ho-

'nour indeed; but if you knew
 'what that greatness was, as well
 'as I, you would value less that
 'honour.' Being in some agony
 of spirit, after a religious meeting
 we had in her chamber, she said,
 'It is a hard thing to be faithful
 'to what one knows: O, the
 'way is strait! I am afraid I am
 'not weighty enough in my spi-
 'rit to walk in it.' She once
 withdrew, on purpose to give
 her servants the liberty of dis-
 coursing us, that they might
 the more freely put what ques-
 tions of conscience they desired
 to be satisfied in; for they were
 religious: suffering both them,
 and the poorest of her town, to

fit by her in her own bed-chamber, where we had two meetings. I cannot forget her last words, when I took my leave of her: ' Let me desire you to remember me, though I live at this distance, and that you should never see me more: I thank you for this good time; and know and be assured, tho' my condition subjects me to divers temptations, yet my soul hath strong desires after the best things.' She lived a single life till about sixty years of age, and then departed at her own house in Herwerden, in the year 1680, as much lamented, as she had lived beloved, of the people: to whose real

worth, I do, with a religious gratitude, for her kind reception, dedicate this memorial.

W. P E N N.

BULSTRODE WHITLOCK was a man in high office, and of very great abilities ; a scholar, a lawyer, a statesman ; in short, he was one of the most accomplished men of the age. In his retirement from the world, being visited by a friend, he, among other serious observations, expressed himself thus : ‘ I
 ‘ have ever thought there has
 ‘ been one true religion in the
 ‘ world, and that is the work of
 ‘ the Spirit of God in the hearts

‘ and souls of men. There have
 ‘ been, indeed, divers forms and
 ‘ shapes of things, through the
 ‘ many dispensations of God to
 ‘ men, answerable to his own
 ‘ wise ends, in reference to the
 ‘ low and uncertain state of man
 ‘ in the world. The old world
 ‘ had the Spirit of God, and the
 ‘ new world has the same Spirit,
 ‘ both Jew and Gentile, and
 ‘ it strives with all: and they,
 ‘ who have been led by it, have
 ‘ been the good people in every
 ‘ dispensation of God to the world.
 ‘ And I myself must say, that I
 ‘ have felt it from a child to con-
 ‘ vince me of my evil and vanity;
 ‘ and it has often given me a true

‘ measure of this poor world, and
 ‘ some taste of divine things ; and
 ‘ it is my grief that I did not more
 ‘ early apply my soul to it : for I
 ‘ can say, since my retirement
 ‘ from the greatness and hurries of
 ‘ the world, I have felt something
 ‘ of the work and comfort of it,
 ‘ and that it is both ready and able
 ‘ to instruct, and lead, and preserve
 ‘ those who will humbly and sin-
 ‘ cerely hearken to it. So that
 ‘ my religion is, the good Spirit
 ‘ of God in my heart ; I mean
 ‘ what that has wrought in me
 ‘ and for me.’

ANTHONY LOWTHER, of Mask, was a person of good sense, of a sweet temper, a just mind, and of a sober education ; when of age to be under his own government, he was drawn, by the men of pleasure of the town, into the usual freedoms of it, and was as much a judge as any body, of the satisfaction that way of life could yield ; but some time before his sickness, with a free and strong judgment, he would frequently upbraid himself, and condemn the world for those unseasonable, as well as unchristian, liberties that so much abound in it ; which apprehension increased, by the instruction of a long and sharp sick-

ness: he would often despise their folly, and abhor their guilt; breathing, with some impatience, after the knowledge of the best things, and the best company, losing as little time as he could, that he might redeem the time he had lost; testifying often, with a lively relish, to the truth of religion, from the sense he had of it in his own breast: frequently declaring, ‘ He knew no joy
 ‘ comparable to that of being as-
 ‘ fured of the love and mercy of
 ‘ God.’ And as he often implored it with strong convictions, and a deep humility and reverence, so he had frequently tastes thereof

before his last period; pressing
 his relations and friends, in a most
 serious and affectionate manner,
 ‘ To love God, and one another,
 ‘ more, and this vile world less.’
 And of this he was so full, it was
 almost ever the conclusion of his
 most inward discourses with his
 family. He sometimes said, ‘ That
 ‘ though he could have been will-
 ‘ ing to have lived, if God had
 ‘ pleased, to see his younger
 ‘ children nearer a settlement in
 ‘ the world; yet he felt no de-
 ‘ sire to live longer in the world,
 ‘ but on the terms of living better
 ‘ in it. For that he did not only
 ‘ think virtue the safest, but the
 ‘ happiest way of living:’ com-

mending and commanding it to his children upon his last blessing.

*Extract of a LETTER wrote by the
EARL of ESSEX, to his particular
friend the EARL of SOUTHAMP-
TON, some time before his death.*

WITH respect to your natural gifts and abilities, remember, First, that you have nothing which you have not received. Secondly, that you possess them, not as a lord over them, but as one who must give an account for them. Thirdly, if you

employ them to serve this world, or your own worldly delight, which the prince of this world will seek to entertain you with; it is ingratitude, it is injustice, yea, it is perfidious treachery. For what would you think of such a servant of your's, who should convert your goods, committed to his charge, to the advantage or service of your greatest enemy? And what do you less than this with God; since you have all from him, and know that the world, and the princes thereof, are at continual enmity with him. Therefore, if ever the admonition of your truest friend shall be heard by

t

you; or if your country, which you may serve in so great and many things, be dear unto you; if your God, whom you must (if you deal truly with yourself) acknowledge to be powerful over all, and just in all, be feared by you; yea, if you be dear unto yourself, and prefer an everlasting happiness before a pleasant dream, out of which you must shortly awake, and then repent in the bitterness of your soul; if any of these things be regarded by you, then, I say, call yourself to account for what is past; cancel all the leagues you have made without the

warrant of a religious conscience; make a regular covenant with your God, to serve him with all your natural and spiritual, inward and outward gifts and abilities: and then he, who is faithful and cannot lie, and hath promised to honour those who honour him, will give you that inward peace of soul, and true joy of heart, which, till you have, you will never rest; and which, when you have, you shall never be shaken; and which you can never attain to any other way.

ESSEX,

The Honourable ROBERT BOYLE, the most exact searcher into the works of nature that any age has known, and who saw Atheism and Infidelity beginning to shew themselves in the loose and voluptuous reign of King Charles the Second, pursued his philosophical enquiries with religious views, to establish the minds of men in a firm belief, and thorough sense, of the infinite power and wisdom of the great Creator.

This account we have from DR. BURNET, who was intimately acquainted with him, and who says, ‘ It appeared from ‘ those who conversed with him ‘ on his enquiries into nature,

' that his main design in that (on
 ' which as he had his own eye
 ' constantly, so he took care to
 ' put others often in mind of it)
 ' was to raise in himself and
 ' others, vaster thoughts of the
 ' greatness and glory, and of the
 ' wisdom and goodness of God.'

This was so deep in his thoughts,
 that he concludes the article of his
 will, which relates to the Royal
 Society, in these words, 'Wishing
 ' them a happy success in their
 ' attempts to discover the true
 ' nature of the works of God;
 ' and praying that they, and all
 ' other searchers into physical
 ' truths, may cordially refer their
 ' attainments, to the glory of the

‘ great Author of Nature, and to
‘ the comfort of mankind.’

In another place the same person
speaks of him thus: ‘ He had the
‘ profoundest veneration for the
‘ great God of heaven and earth,
‘ that I ever observed in any man.
‘ The very name of God was ne-
‘ ver mentioned by him, without
/ ‘ a pause and visible stop in his
‘ discourse.’

Of the strictness and exem-
plariness of the whole course of
his life, he says: ‘ I might here
‘ challenge the whole tribe of li-
‘ bertines, to come and view the
‘ usefulness, as well as the excel-
‘ lence, of the Christian Religion,

‘ in a life that was entirely dedicated to it.’

The veneration he had for the holy scriptures appears, not only from his studying them with great attention, and exhorting others to do the same ; but more particularly, from a distinct treatise which he wrote, on purpose to defend the scripture style, and to answer all the objections which profane and irreligious persons have made against it. And his zeal in propagating Christianity in the world, appears by many and large benefactions to that end.

The great NEWTON is universally acknowledged to be the most profound Philosopher that this, or perhaps any other, nation has produced: the vastness of his mental powers has excited the admiration of the greatest geniuses in Europe. This excellent person is well known to have been a firm believer, and a serious Christian. His discoveries concerning the frame and system of the universe, were applied by him, to demonstrate the being of a God, and to illustrate his power and wisdom in the creation. He applied himself also, with the utmost attention, to the study of the holy scriptures, and considered the se-

veral parts of them with uncommon exactness; particularly, as to the order of time, and the series of prophecies and events relating to the Messiah. Upon which head, he has left behind him an excellent discourse, to prove that the famous prophecy of Daniel's weeks, which has been so industriously perverted by the Deists of our times, was an express prophecy of the coming of the Messiah, and fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

The celebrated JOHN LOCKE, whose sound judgment and accurate talent in reasoning, are so much commended, even by the

Sceptics and Infidels of our times, shewed his zeal for the Christian religion; first, in his middle age, by publishing a discourse on purpose to demonstrate the reasonableness of believing Jesus to be the promised Messiah; and after that, in the latter years of his life, by a very judicious commentary upon several of the epistles of the Apostle Paul. The scriptures are every where mentioned by him with the greatest reverence; and he exhorts Christians, ‘ to betake
 ‘ themselves in earnest to the stu-
 ‘ dy of the way to salvation, in
 ‘ those holy writings, wherein
 ‘ God has revealed it from hea-

' ven, and proposed it to the
 ' world ; seeking our religion
 ' where we are sure it is in
 ' truth to be found, comparing
 ' spiritual things with spiritual.'
 And, in a letter written the year
 before his death to one who asked
 this question, ' What is the short-
 ' est and surest way for a young
 ' man to attain to the true know-
 ' ledge of the Christian religion ?'
 His answer is, ' Let him study
 ' the holy scriptures, especially
 ' the New Testament. Therein are
 ' contained the words of eternal
 ' life. It has God for its author ;
 ' salvation for its end ; and truth,
 ' without any mixture of error,
 ' for its matter.' A direction

that was copied from his own practice, in the latter part of his life, and after his retirement from business ; when, for ‘ fourteen or
 ‘ fifteen years, he applied himself
 ‘ especially, to the study of the
 ‘ scriptures, and employed the
 ‘ last years of his life hardly in
 ‘ any thing else. He was never
 ‘ weary of admiring the great
 ‘ views of that sacred book, and
 ‘ the just relation of all its parts.
 ‘ He every day made discoveries
 ‘ in it that gave him fresh cause
 ‘ of admiration.’

The death of this great man was agreeable to his life. For we are assured by one that was with

him when he died, and had lived in the same family for seven years before, that, the day before his death, he particularly exhorted all about him to read the scriptures ; that he desired to be remembered by them at evening prayers ; and being told that, if he chose it, the whole family should be with him in his chamber; he answered, he should be very glad to have it so, if it would not give too much trouble ; that an occasion offering to speak of the goodness of God, he especially exalted the care which God shewed to man in justifying him by faith in Jesus Christ; and returned God thanks in particular for having blessed

him with the knowledge of that divine Saviour.

About two months before his death, he drew up a letter to his friend ANTHONY COLLINS, and left this direction upon it, ' To be delivered to him after my decease.'

The following is a copy of it.

I Know you loved me living, and will preserve my memory when I am dead. All the use to be made of it, is, that this life is a scene of vanity which soon passes away, and affords no solid satisfaction but in the consci-

ousness of doing well, and in the hopes of another life. This is what I can say upon experience, and what you will find to be true, when you come to make up the account.

Adieu, I leave my best wishes with you.

JOHN LOCKE.

The admired ADDISON has also given abundant proof of his belief of Christianity, and his zeal against unbelievers, in his evidences of the Christian religion. His writings on religious subjects discover a pious and solid frame of mind; and his general conduct

in life gives us a convincing proof, that what he wrote were the genuine feelings of his heart. But his virtue shone out brightest at the point of death; for, after a long and manly, but vain, struggle with his distempers, he dismissed his physicians, and with them all hopes of life; but with his hopes of life he dismissed not his concern for the living, but sent for a youth nearly related, and finely accomplished, yet not above being ~~the~~ the better for good impressions from a dying friend. He came; but life now glimmering in the socket, the dying friend was silent. After a decent and proper pause, the youth said,

‘ Dear Sir ! you sent for me : I
‘ believe, and hope you have some
‘ commands ; I shall hold them
‘ most dear.’ May distant ages
not only hear, but feel, the reply !
Forcibly grasping the youth’s
hand, he softly said, ‘ See in
‘ what peace a Christian can die.’
He spoke with difficulty, and
soon expired. Through divine
grace, how great is man ! thro’
divine mercy, how stingless death !

HENRY, Prince of Wales, eldest
son to King JAMES the First, of
whom others say many excellent
things, had but little to say for
himself at last. A person whom

he loved, and that had been the companion of his diversions, being with him in his sickness, and asking him, ' How he did,' was, amongst many other sober expressions, answered thus: ' Ah, ' Tom ! I in vain wish for that ' time I lost with thee, and others, ' in vain recreations.' So vain were recreations, and so precious was time to a prince, and no ordinary one neither, upon a dying-bed. But why wished he, with others, for more time, but that it might be better employed. Thus hath the just principle and holy Spirit of God in men, throughout all generations, convinced them of their vanity and folly

upon their dying-beds, who before were too much taken up, to mind either a dying-bed, or a vast eternity: but when their days were almost numbered; when mortality hastened on them; when the revelation of the righteous judgment was at the door, and all their worldly recreations and enjoyments must be parted with, O then! the holy witness had room to plead with conscience: then nothing but an holy, strict, and severe, life, was valuable; then all the world for a little time, who before had given all their time for a little of a vain world. But if so short a representation of the inconsistency of the vanities

of the world, with the Christian life, could make so deep an impression; to what a noble stature, and large proportion, had they been grown in pious and heavenly knowledge; and how much greater had their rewards been, if they contentedly had foregone those perishing entertainments of the world betimes, and given their minds to the tuition and guidance of that universal grace and holy Spirit of God, which had so long shined in darkness, uncomprehended of it, and was at last but just perceived to give a sight of what they had been doing all their days !

JOHN, EARL of ROCHESTER.

An illustrious and instructive instance of the power of religion upon the mind, in the time of sickness and death, is JOHN, Earl of Rochester; descendant of a great family, of a liberal education, and great personal accomplishments; and by his sincere repentance, and happy death, he appeared to be (as it is judiciously expressed of him) ‘a very great man every way; a great wit, a great scholar, a great poet, a great sinner, and a great penitent.’

Such he is described to be by two eminent men, who personally knew him, and attended him in his

last sickness. And herein God has shewn the freeness and richness of his mercy, to save one who seemed to have made a covenant with death, and was at an agreement with hell. Something similar to the Apostle Paul, tho' before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious; yet obtained mercy, that in him Christ Jesus might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them, that should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life, 1 Tim. 1 ch. 13, 16.

So he was, as it were, struck to the ground, by a light from heaven, and a voice of thunder round about him; insomuch, that now

the scales fell from his eyes, as they did from Paul's; his stony heart was opened, and streams of tears gushed out, the bitter, but wholesome, tears of true repentance.

He had advanced to an uncommon height of impiety, having been an advocate in the black cause of Atheism. He had raked too in the very bottom of the jakes of debauchery, and had been a satyrist against virtue. But when, like the prodigal in the gospel, he came to himself, great horror filled his mind, and forced sharp and bitter invectives from him, against himself; terming himself the vilest wretch that ever the sun shined upon; wishing he

had been a crawling leper in a ditch, a link-boy, or a beggar, or had lived in a dungeon, rather than offended the Lord as he had done.

Being at one time under great trouble of mind, and his conscience full of terror, he told the person who attended him, that,
 ‘ When on his journey, he had
 ‘ been arguing with greater vigor
 ‘ against God and religion, than
 ‘ ever he had done in his life-
 ‘ time before, and that he resolved
 ‘ to run them down, with all the
 ‘ arguments and spite in the
 ‘ world; but, like the great con-
 ‘ vert, Paul, he found it hard to

‘kick against God.’ For his heart was at that time struck so powerfully, that he argued as much for God and virtue, as ever he had done against them.

He had such tremendous apprehensions of the Divine Majesty, mingled with such delightful contemplations of his nature and perfections, and of the amiableness of religion, that he said, ‘I never was advanced thus far towards happiness in my life before, tho’, upon the commission of some sins extraordinary, ‘I have had some checks and ‘warnings considerable from ‘within; but still struggled with ‘them, and so wore them off

‘ again. One day, at an Atheistical
‘ meeting at the house of a person
‘ of quality, I undertook to ma-
‘ nage the cause, and was the
‘ principle disputant against God
‘ and piety; and, for my per-
‘ formances, received the ap-
‘ plause of the whole company.
‘ Upon which my mind was ter-
‘ ribly struck, and I immediately
‘ replied thus to myself, “ Good
“ God! that a man who walks
“ upright, who sees the wonder-
“ ful works of God, and has the
“ use of his senses and reason,
“ should use them to the defying
“ of his Creator !” ‘ But though
‘ this was a good beginning to-

‘wards my conversion, to find
‘my conscience touched for my
‘sins, yet it went off again; nay,
‘all my life long, I had a secret
‘value and reverence for an
‘honest man, and loved morality
‘in others. But I had formed
‘to myself an odd scheme of
‘religion, which would solve all
‘that God, or conscience, might
‘force upon me; yet I was not
‘ever well reconciled to the business of Christianity, nor had
‘that reverence for the gospel of
‘Christ, which I ought to have
‘had.’

This state of mind continued
till the 53d chapter of Isaiah was
read to him, together with some

other parts of the sacred scriptures; when it pleased God to fill his mind with such peace and joy, in believing, that it was remarkable to all about him.

And he frequently desired those who were with him, to read the 53d of Isaiah to him, upon which he used to descant in a very affectionate paraphrase, applying the weighty sentences thereof to his own humiliation and comfort,

‘ Oh ! blessed God ! can such
‘ an horrid creature as I am, be
‘ accepted by thee, who have de-
‘ nied thy being, and contemned
‘ thy power ? Can there be mercy

‘ and pardon for me ? will God
‘ own such a wretch as I ?’

And in the middle of his sickness, he said, ‘ Shall the unspeakable joys of heaven be conferred on me ? Oh ! mighty Saviour ! never, but thro’ thine infinite love and satisfaction !
| ‘ O, never, but by the purchase of thy blood !’ adding, ‘ That with all abhorrence he did reflect upon his former life ; that sincerely, and from his heart, he repented of all that folly and madness which he had committed.’

His faith was very remarkable in embracing the Christian religion ; and he justly condemned

‘ That foolish and absurd philosophy, which the world so much admired, propagated by the late Hobbes, and others, which had undone him, and many more of the best parts in the nation.’

His faith rested alone on Christ for salvation, and therefore appeared to be of the right kind. He would often entreat ‘ God to strengthen his faith,’ crying out “ Lord, I believe; help mine unbelief.”

He had a growing esteem for the holy scriptures, and evidently saw their divine usefulness and excellency : ‘ For, having spoken to his heart, he acknowledged,

‘ that all the seeming absurdities
 ‘ and contradictions, fancied by
 ‘ men of corrupt and reprobate
 ‘ judgments, were vanished ; and
 ‘ the excellency and beauty ap-
 ‘ peared, being come to receive
 ‘ the truth in the love of it.’

Satan, the grand adversary of
 souls, used to assault him with
 many temptations and evil sug-
 gestions, and many things preju-
 dicial to that religious temper of
 mind with which God had now
 endued him. One night especially,
 the Tempter did make no little use
 of his fiery darts, by casting
 upon him lewd and wicked ima-
 ginations:—But ‘ I thank God,’
 said he, ‘ I abhor them all, and

‘ by the power of his grace, which
‘ I am fure is sufficient for me, I
‘ have overcome them. ’Tis the
‘ malice of the Devil, because I
‘ am rescued from him, and it is
‘ the goodness of God, that frees
‘ me from all my spiritual ene-
‘ mies.’

There are many proofs of the
sincerity of his faith, and the
soundness of his repentance;
among others, I shall single out
those that follow.

His hearty concern for the
pious education of his children;
wishing--‘ his son might never be
‘ a wit, as he explained it, one of
‘ those wretched creatures, who
‘ pride themselves in ridiculing

‘ God and religion, denying his
‘ being or his providence: but that
‘ he might become an honest man,
‘ and of a truly religious character,
‘ which only could be the support
‘ and blessing of his family.’

He left a strict charge to the
persons in whose custody his pa-
pers were, - ‘ to burn all his profane
‘ and lewd writings, (as being only
‘ fit to promote vice and immora-
‘ lity, by which he had so highly
‘ offended, and shamed, and blas-
‘ phemed that holy religion into
‘ which he had been baptised) and
‘ all his obscene and filthy pictures,
‘ which were so notoriously scan-
‘ dalous.’

He protested,—‘ he would not
‘ commit a known sin to gain a
‘ kingdom :’ and sent awful mes-
sages to his companions in ini-
quity.

He advised a gentleman of cha-
racter who came to see him on
his death-bed, ‘ O! remember
‘ that you condemn God no more.
‘ He is an avenging God, and
‘ will visit you for your sins; and
‘ will, I hope, in mercy touch
‘ your conscience, sooner or later,
‘ as he has done mine. You and
‘ I have been friends and sinners
‘ together a great while, there-
‘ fore I am the more free with
‘ you. We have been all mistia-

‘ ken in our conceits and opini-
 ‘ ons; our persuasions have been
 ‘ false and groundless; therefore
 ‘ God grant you repentance.’

And seeing the gentleman the
 next day, he said, ‘ Perhaps you
 ‘ were disoblged by my plain-
 ‘ nefs with you yesterday; I spake
 ‘ the words of truth and sober-
 ‘ nefs.’ And striking his hand
 upon his breast, said, ‘ I hope
 ‘ God will touch your heart.’

He laid his commands on the
 persons who attended him, ‘ To
 ‘ spread abroad, and to let all men
 ‘ know, if they knew it not al-
 ‘ ready, how God had disciplined
 ‘ him for his sins, by his afflict-
 ‘ ing hand; that his sufferings

‘ were most just, tho’ he had laid
‘ ten thousand times more upon
‘ him. That he had laid one
‘ stripe upon another, because of
‘ his grievous provocations, until
‘ he had brought him home to
‘ himself. That his former visita-
‘ tions had not had that blessed ef-
‘ fect he was now sensible of. That
‘ he had formerly some loose
‘ thoughts and slight resolutions
‘ of reforming, and designed to
‘ be better; because even the pre-
‘ sent consequences of sin were still
‘ pestering him, and were so trou-
‘ blefome and inconvenient to
‘ him. But now he had other

‘ sentiments of things, and acted
‘ upon other principles.’

That none, whom he had been
the instrument of drawing into
sin, might lose the benefit of his
sincere, though late repentance,
he subscribed the following recan-
tation, and ordered it to be pub-
lished to the world.

‘ For the benefit of all those
‘ whom I may have drawn into sin,
‘ by my example and encourage-
‘ ment, I leave to the world this
‘ my last declaration, which I deli-
‘ ver in the presence of the great
‘ God who knows the secrets of
‘ all hearts, and before whom I am
‘ preparing to be judged; that from
‘ the bottom of my soul I detest

‘ and abhor the whole course of my
 ‘ former wicked life: that I think
 ‘ I can never sufficiently admire the
 ‘ goodness of God, who has given
 ‘ me a true sense of my pernicious
 ‘ opinions, and vile practices; by
 ‘ which I have hitherto lived with-
 ‘ out hope, and without God in the
 ‘ world; have been an open enemy
 ‘ to Jesus Christ, doing the utmost
 ‘ despite to the holy Spirit of grace;
 ‘ and that the greatest testimony of
 ‘ my charity to such is, to warn
 ‘ them in the name of God, and as
 ‘ they regard the welfare of their
 ‘ immortal souls, no more to deny
 ‘ his being or his providence, or
 ‘ despise his goodness; no more

‘ to make a mock of sin, or con-
‘ temn the pure and excellent re-
‘ ligion of my ever blessed Re-
‘ deemer, through whose merits
‘ alone, I, one of the greatest of
‘ sinners, do yet hope for mercy
‘ and forgiveness.’ Amen.

J. ROCHESTER.

*Delivered and signed in the pre-
sence of* ANN Rochester.

ROBERT PARSONS.

We shall now attend him to his bed of languishing and death, and view the power of religion upon his mind, in that important season. He seemed to have no desire to live but to testify the truth of his repentance, and to bring

glory to God. 'If God,' says he,
 ' should spare me yet a little longer
 ' time here, I hope to bring
 ' glory to his name, proportion-
 ' ably to the dishonour I have
 ' done him, in my whole life past;
 ' and particularly by endeavours
 ' to convince others, and to assure
 ' them of the danger of their con-
 ' dition, if they continued impe-
 ' nitent; and to tell them, how
 ' graciously God hath dealt with
 ' me.'

And when he came within the
 nearer views of death, about three
 or four days before it, he said,
 ' I shall now die. But, O, what
 ' unspeakable glories do I feel!
 ' what joys, beyond thought or

‘ expression, am I sensible of! I
‘ am assured of God’s mercy to me,
thro’ Jesus Christ. O! how I
‘ long to die, and to be with my
‘ Saviour.’

HERVEY, *when on a sick-bed, to a*

FRIEND.

MY health is continually upon
the decline, and the springs
of life are all relaxing. My age is
removing, and departing from
me as a shepherd’s tent. Medicine
is baffled; and my physician, Dr.
Stonehouse, who is a dear friend
to his patient, and a lover of the
Lord Jesus, pities, but cannot
succour me.

. Now I apprehend myself near the close of life, and stand, as it were, on the brink of the grave, with eternity full in my view; perhaps my dear friend would be willing to know my sentiments in this awful situation. At such a juncture the mind is most unprejudiced, and the judgment not so liable to be dazzled by the glitter of worldly objects.

I have been too fond of reading every thing valuable and elegant that has been penned in our own language, and been peculiarly charmed with the historians, orators, and poets of antiquity: but was I to renew my studies, I would take leave of those accom-

plished trifles; I would resign the delights of modern wits, amusement and eloquence, and devote my attention to the scriptures of truth. I would sit with much greater assiduity at my Divine Master's feet, and desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

JOHN, LORD HARRINGTON, was the eldest son of that Lord Harrington to whom King James the First committed the education of his eldest daughter, the Princess Elizabeth.

He had excellent natural endowments, and had acquired a considerable stock of useful learn-

ing ; but was mostly eminent for his knowledge in the work of his salvation.

He manifested a principle of true life in his heart, by his love to all who were truly godly. And such were his bowels of compassion, that he gave the tenth part of his yearly income to charitable uses.

At the beginning of his last sickness, he strongly apprehended that death would be the end of it, and accordingly prepared for the grave.

He declared his faith in, and undoubted hope of, salvation by Christ ; and said, with much chearfulness, ' That he feared not

‘ death in what shape soever it
‘ might assail him.’ In the midst
of many heavenly things, which
dropped from time to time from
his mouth, he desired to be dis-
solved, and to be at home with the
Lord, declaring, not above two
hours before his death, ‘ That he
‘ still felt the comfort and joys of
‘ assured salvation, by Christ Je-
‘ sus.’ And when the hour of
his departure was come, he said,
‘ O, that joy ! O, my God ! when
‘ shall I be with thee ?’ And with
the like words, expressive of a
tender heavenly frame of mind,
he peacefully expired.

*From the younger VILLIERS,
DUKE of BUCKINGHAM, on
his death-bed, to Dr. W——*

DEAR DOCTOR,

I Always looked upon you to
be a person of true virtue,
and know you to have a sound
understanding; for however I
may have acted in opposition to
the principles of religion, or the
dictates of reason, I can honestly
assure you, I have always had the
highest veneration for both. The
world and I shake hands; for I
dare affirm, we are heartily
weary of each other. O, what a

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prodigal have I been of that most valuable of all possessions, Time ! I have squandered it away with a profusion unparalleled ; and now, when the enjoyment of a few days would be worth the world, I cannot flatter myself with the prospect of half a dozen hours. How despicable, my dear friend, is that man who never prays to his God, but in the time of distress ? In what manner can he supplicate that omnipotent Being, in his afflictions, whom, in the time of his prosperity, he never remembered with reverence ?

Don't brand me with infidelity, when I tell you, that I am almost ashamed to offer up my petitions

at the throne of Grace, or to implore that divine mercy in the next world, which I have scandalously abused in this.

Shall ingratitude to man be looked upon as the blackest of crimes, and not ingratitude to God ?

Shall an insult offered to the king be looked upon in the most offensive light, and yet no notice taken when the King of kings is treated with indignity and disrespect ?

The companions of my former libertinism would scarcely believe their eyes, were you to shew them this epistle. They would laugh

at me as a dreaming enthusiast, or pity me as a timorous wretch, who was shocked at the appearance of futurity ; but whoever laughs at me for being right, or pities me for being sensible of my errors, is more entitled to my compassion, than resentment. A future state may well enough strike terror into any man, who has not acted well in this life; and he must have an uncommon share of courage indeed, who does not shrink at the presence of God. The apprehensions of death will soon bring the most profligate to a proper use of his understanding. To what a situation am I now reduced ? Is this odious little hut

a suitable lodging for a Prince ? is this anxiety of mind becoming the character of a Christian ? From my rank, I might have expected affluence to wait upon my life ; from religion and understanding, Peace to smile upon my end : instead of which I am afflicted with Poverty, and haunted with remorse ; despised by my country, and I fear forsaken by my God.

There is nothing so dangerous as extraordinary abilities : I cannot be accused of vanity now, by being sensible that I was once possessed of uncommon qualifications, especially as I sincerely regret that I ever had them. My

rank in life made these accomplishments still more conspicuous; and, fascinated by the general applause which they procured, I never considered the proper means by which they should be displayed. Hence, to procure a smile from a blockhead whom I despised, I have frequently treated the virtuous with disrespect; and sported with the holy name of heaven, to obtain a laugh from a parcel of fools, who were entitled to nothing but contempt.

Your men of wit generally look upon themselves as discharged from the duties of religion, and confine the doctrines of the gospel to people of meaner under-

standings. It is a sort of derogation, in their opinion, to comply with the rules of Christianity : and they reckon that man possessed of a narrow genius, who studies to be good.

What a pity that the holy writings are not made the criterion of true judgment; or that any person should pass for a fine gentleman in this world, but he that appears solicitous about his happiness in the next.

I am forsaken by all my acquaintance, utterly neglected by the friends of my bosom, and the dependants on my bounty : but no matter ! I am not fit to converse with the former, and have

no ability to serve the latter. Let me not however be wholly cast off by the good. Favour me with a visit as soon as possible. Writing to you gives me some ease, especially on a subject I could talk of for ever.

I am of opinion this is the last visit I shall ever solicit from you; my distemper is powerful; come and pray for the departing spirit of the poor unhappy

BUCKINGHAM.

COL. JAMES GARDINER, a person of distinguished character, was for many years of his life greatly addicted to sensual plea-

fures. With a strong constitution of body, great flow of animal spirits, fine personal accomplishments, and a large circle of polite connections, he seemed as amply qualified as most men, to range in the field of animal enjoyments, and to extract from them all they were capable of yielding. Yet this compleat sensualist, in the meridian of his joys, bitterly experienced "That even in laughter their hearts are sorrowful, and the end of their mirth is heaviness."

' Being at one time congratulated, by some of his dissolute companions, on his distinguished felicity, and a dog happening at

that time to come into the room, he could not forbear groaning inwardly, and saying to himself, ' Oh! that I were that dog!' Such was then his happiness; and such perhaps is that of hundreds more, who bear themselves highest in the contempt of religion, and glory in that infamous servitude which they affect to call liberty.

' His continual neglect of the great Author of his being, of whose perfections he could not doubt, and to whom he knew himself to be under daily and perpetual obligations, gave him, in some moments of involuntary reflection, inexpressible remorse;

and this, at times, wrought upon him to such a degree, that he resolved he would attempt to pay him some acknowledgments. Accordingly, for a time, he did it; repeating, in retirement, some passages out of the Psalms, and perhaps other scriptures, which he still retained in his memory; and owning, in a few strong words, the many mercies and deliverances he had received, and the ill returns he had made for them. But these strains were too devout to continue long in a heart as yet quite un-sanctified: for how readily soever he could repeat acknowledgments of the Divine power,

presence, and goodness, and own his follies and faults; he was stopt short by the remonstrances of his conscience, as to the flagrant absurdity of confessing sins he did not desire to forsake, and of pretending to praise God for his mercies, when he did not endeavour to live to his service, and to behave in such a manner as gratitude, if sincere, would plainly dictate.'

At length it pleased the Author of all good, so to visit his soul, that, heartily joining therewith, he became a sincere penitent, and continued the remainder of his days, a bright and steady example of virtue and goodness. His

gratitude to God for his singular deliverance, his continued sense of the friendship of so gracious a Being, and his unshaken hope of eternal happiness, filled his heart with unutterable peace and joy ; and caused abundant compassion for those unhappy persons who prefer the transient amusements of a day, to the highest of all enjoyments, the perpetual love and favour of an Almighty Friend. Many of his letters, and particularly the following ones to his wife and to an intimate acquaintance, testify his favoured state of mind, and how

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great was his enjoyment in communion with the Father of Spirits.

‘ I bleſs God, I was never better in my life; and I wiſh I could be ſo happy as to hear the ſame of you; or rather (in other words) to hear that you had obtained an entire truſt in God. That would infallibly keep you in perfect peace; for the God of truth hath promiſed it. Oh! how ought we to be longing to be with Chriſt, which is infinitely better than any thing we can propoſe here! To be there, where all complaints ſhall be for ever baniſhed: where no mountains ſhall ſeparate between God and our ſouls. And I hope it will be ſome

' addition to our happiness, that
 ' you and I shall be separated no
 ' more; but that, as we have join-
 ' ed in singing the praises of our
 ' glorious Redeemer here, we
 ' shall sing them in a much
 ' higher strain thro' an endless
 ' eternity.' ——— Speaking of
 one of his children, who, he had
 heard, made a commendable
 progress in learning, he expres-
 ses his satisfaction in it, and adds,
 ' But how much greater joy wou'd
 ' it give me, to hear that he was
 ' greatly advanced in the school of
 ' Christ! Oh! that our children
 ' may but be wise to salvation;

‘ and may grow in grace, as they
‘ do in stature !’

‘ What would I have given
‘ this day, upon the road, for pa-
‘ per, pen, and ink, when the
‘ Spirit of the Most High rested
‘ upon me ! Oh ! for the pen of a
‘ ready writer, and the tongue of
‘ an angel, to declare what God
‘ hath done this day for my soul !
‘ But, in short, it is in vain to at-
‘ tempt it : all that I am able to
‘ say, is only this, that my soul
‘ has been for some hours joining
‘ with the blessed spirits above, in
“ giving glory and honour, and
“ praise, unto him that sitteth
“ upon the throne, and to the
“ Lamb for ever and ever.” ‘ My

' praises began from a renewed
 ' view of him, whom I saw pier-
 ' ced for my transgressions. I
 ' summoned the whole hierarchy
 ' of heaven to join with me ; and
 ' I am persuaded, they all echoed
 ' back praise to the Most High'.

' Such were the elevations of his
 mind ; yet, while I record these
 memorials of them, I am very
 sensible, there are many who will
 be inclined to censure them, as
 the flights of enthusiasm.'

' But when we consider the
 scriptural phrases " of walking
 " with God ; of having commu-
 " nion with the Father and his
 " Son Jesus Christ ; of Christ's

“ coming to them that open the
 “ door of their hearts to him,
 “ and supping with them ; of
 “ God’s shedding abroad his love
 “ in the heart by his Spirit ; of his
 “ coming with Jesus Christ and
 “ making his abode with any one
 “ that loves him : of making us
 “ glad by the light of his counte-
 “ nance,” and a variety of other
 equivalent expressions, we shall
 see reason to judge very favour-
 ably of the declarations contained
 in these letters.’

‘ If habitual love to God ; firm
 faith in the Lord Jesus Christ ; a
 steady dependence on the Divine
 promises ; a full persuasion of the
 wisdom and goodness of all the

dispensations of Providence; a high esteem for the blessings of the heavenly world; and a sincere contempt for the vanities of this, can properly be called enthusiasm, then was Col. Gardiner indeed one of the greatest enthusiasts our age has produced; and in proportion to the degree in which he was so, I must esteem him one of the wisest and happiest of mankind !

“ How often, (says the ingenious and pious Grove) are good thoughts suggested, heavenly affections kindled, and inflamed ! How often is the Christian prompted to holy actions,

“ drawn to his duty, restored,
“ quickened, persuaded, in such
“ a manner, that he would be un-
“ just to the Spirit of God, to que-
“ stion his agency in the whole !
“ Yes, O my soul, there is a Su-
“ preme Being, who governs the
“ world, and is present with it;
“ who takes up his more special
“ habitation in good men, and is
“ nigh to all who call upon him,
“ to sanctify and assist them !
“ Hast thou not felt him ! O ! my
“ soul, like another soul, actuat-
“ ing thy faculties, exalting thy
“ views, purifying thy passions,
“ exciting thy graces, and beget-
“ ting in thee an abhorrence of
“ sin, and a love of holiness ? And

“ is not all this an argument of
“ his presence, as truly as if thou
“ didst see him ? ”

*The dying advice of DUNCAN
FORBES, late LORD PRESI-
DENT of SCOTLAND.*

I WILL conclude with that which
is the most important of all
other things, and which alone
will carry every thing else along
with it; which is to recommend,
in the most solemn and serious
manner, the study and practice of
religion to all sorts of men, as that
which is both the light of the
world, and salt of the earth. No-

thing does so open our faculties, and compose and direct the whole man, as an inward sense of God; of his authority over us; of the laws he hath set us; of his eye ever upon us; of his hearing our prayers; assisting our endeavours; watching over our concerns; of his being to judge and reward or punish us in another state, according to what we do in this. Nothing will give a man such a detestation of sin, and such a sense of the goodness of God, and of our obligations to holiness, as a right understanding and firm belief of the Christian religion. Nothing can give a man so calm a peace within, and such a firm

security against all fears and dangers without, as the belief of a kind wise Providence, and of a future state. Integrity of heart gives a man courage and confidence that cannot be shaken. A man is sure that by living according to the rules of religion, he becomes the wisest, the best, and happiest creature that he is capable of being. Honest industry, the employing of timewell, a constant sobriety, an undefiled purity and chastity with a quiet serenity, are the best preservatives of life and health; so that take a man as an individual, religion is his guard, his perfection, his beauty and his glory. This will make him a

light in the world, shining brightly, and enlightening many round about him.

Thus religion, if truly received and sincerely adhered to, would prove the greatest of all blessings to a nation. But, by religion, I understand something more than the receiving of some doctrines, tho' ever so true, or the professing of them, and engaging to support them, not without zeal and eagerness. What signify the best doctrines, if men do not live suitably to them; if they have not a due influence upon their thoughts and their lives? Men of bad lives, with sound opinions, are self-con-

demned, and lie under a highly aggravated guilt.

By religion, I don ot mean an outward compliance with forms and customs, in going to church, to prayers, to sermons, and to sacraments, with an external shew of devotion; or, which is more, with some inward forced good thoughts, in which many satisfy themselves, while these have no visible effect on their lives, nor any inward force to subdue and rectify their appetites, passions, and secret designs. Those customary performances, how good and useful soever, when understood and rightly directed,

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are of little value when men rest on them, and think, because they do them, they have acquitted themselves of their duty; tho' they continue still proud, covetous, full of deceit, envy, and malice. Even secret prayers, the most effectual means, are designed for a higher end; which is to possess our minds with such a constant and present sense of divine truths, as may make these live in us, and govern us, and draw down such assistance, as to exalt and sanctify our natures.

So that, by religion, I mean such a sense of divine truth as enters into a man, and becomes a spring of a new nature within

him; reforming his thoughts and designs; purifying his heart; sanctifying and governing his whole deportment, his words as well as his actions; convincing him that it is not enough, not to be scandalously vicious, or to be innocent in his conversation, but that he must be intirely, uniformly, and constantly, pure and virtuous, animated with zeal to be still better and better, more eminently good and exemplary.

This is true religion, which is the perfection of human nature, and the joy and delight of every one that feels it active and strong within him. It is true, this is not

arrived at all at once, and it will have an unhappy allay, hanging long even about a good man; but, as those ill mixtures are the perpetual grief of his soul, so that it is his chief care to watch over, and to mortify them, he will be in a continual progress, still gaining ground upon himself; and as he attains to a degree of purity, he will find a flame of life and joy growing up in him. Of this I write with a greater concern and emotion, because I have felt this the true, and indeed, the only, joy which runs thro' a man's heart and life. It is that which hath been for many years my greatest support. I rejoice daily

in it. I feel from it, the earnest of that supreme joy which I want and long for ; and I am sure there is nothing else which can afford any true and compleat happiness.

CHIEF JUSTICE HALE, a man of great piety, wisdom, and learning, has given, in his life and writings, an encouraging testimony to the power and excellency of religion.

‘ True religion’ (saith he)
 ‘ teaches the soul a high veneration of Almighty God, a sincere and upright walking as in the presence of the invisible, all-seeing God; it makes a man truly

‘ love, honour, and obey him,
‘ and therefore careful to know
‘ what his will is; it renders the
‘ heart highly thankful to him, as
‘ his Creator, Redeemer, and Be-
‘ nefactor; it makes a man
‘ entirely depend on him, seek
‘ him for guidance, direction, and
‘ protection, and submit to his
‘ will with all patience and resig-
‘ nation of soul; it gives the law,
‘ not only to his words and ac-
‘ tions, but to his very thoughts
‘ and purposes, that he dares not
‘ entertain thoughts unbecoming
‘ the sight and presence of that
‘ God, to whom all our thoughts
‘ are legible. It crusheth all pride
‘ and haughtiness, both in a man’s

' heart and carriage, and gives him
 ' an humble frame of soul and life,
 ' both in the sight of God and men;
 ' it regulates and governs the pas-
 ' sions of the mind, and brings
 ' them into due moderation and
 ' frame; it gives a man a right esti-
 ' mate of this present world, and sets
 ' the heart and hopes above it, so
 ' that he never loves it more than
 ' it deserves; it makes the wealth,
 ' and the glory of this world, high
 ' places, and great preferments,
 ' but of low and little value to
 ' him; so that he is neither cove-
 ' tous nor ambitious, nor over so-
 ' licitous, concerning the advan-
 ' tages of them. It makes him
 ' value the love of God, and peace

‘ of conscience, above all the
‘ wealth and honour in the world,
‘ and to be very diligent to keep
‘ it inviolably ; he performs all
‘ his duties to God in sincerity
‘ and integrity, and, whilst he
‘ lives on earth, his conversation,
‘ his hopes, his treasures, are in
‘ heaven, and he endeavours to
‘ walk suitably to such a hope.’

Of the inward direction and assistance of the Spirit of God, to the soul, he declares as follows :

‘ Those who truly fear God
‘ have a secret guidance from a
‘ higher wisdom than what is
‘ barely human, namely, the Spi-
‘ rit of Truth and Wisdom, that
‘ doth really and truly, but se-

'cretly, prevent and direct them.
 'Any man that sincerely and
 'truly fears Almighty God, and
 'relies, and calls upon him for
 'his guidance and direction, hath
 'it as really as a son hath the
 'counsel and direction of his fa-
 'ther; and though the voice be
 'not audible, nor the direction
 'always perceptible, or discerni-
 'ble, to sense, yet it is equally as
 'real as if a man heard the voice
 'saying,' "This is the way, walk
 "in it."

'And this secret direction of
 'Almighty God is principally
 'seen, in matters relating to the
 'good of the soul; yet it may also
 'be found in the concerns of this

‘ life, which a good man, that
‘ fears God and begs his direction,
‘ shall very often, if not at all
‘ times, find.

‘ I can call my own experience
‘ to witness that, even in the exter-
‘ nal actions of my whole life, I
‘ was never disappointed of the
‘ best guidance and direction,
‘ when I have, in humility and
‘ sincerity, implored the secret di-
‘ rection and guidance of the Di-
‘ vine Wisdom.

‘ The observation of the secret
‘ admonition of the Spirit of God
‘ in the heart, is an effectual
‘ means to cleanse and sanctify
‘ thy heart, and the more it is at-
‘ tended to, the more it will be

' conversant with thy soul, for thy
 ' instruction.—In the midst of thy
 ' difficulties it will be thy coun-
 ' sellor ; in the midst of thy
 ' temptations it will be thy
 ' strength, and grace sufficient for
 ' thee ; in the midst of thy trou-
 ' bles it will be thy light and thy
 ' comforter : only beware thou
 ' neglect not the voice of this
 ' Spirit ; it may be, thy neglect
 ' may quench it, and thou mayest
 ' never hear that voice more.

' It is impossible for thee to en-
 ' joy that which must make thee
 ' happy, till thou art deeply sen-
 ' sible of thy own emptiness and
 ' nothingness, and thy spirit
 ' thereby brought down and laid

‘ in the dust.—The Spirit of
‘ Christ is an humbling spirit, the
‘ more thou hast of it the more it
‘ will humble thee; and it is a
‘ sign that either thou hast it not,
‘ or that it is yet over mastered by
‘ thy corruptions, if thy heart be
‘ still haughty.

‘ Watch therefore, the secret
‘ persuasions, and dissuasions of
‘ the Spirit of God, and beware
‘ thou quench it not, nor grieve it;
‘ be sure thou observe this voice—
‘ this wind that blows where it
‘ lists, if shut out, resisted, or grie-
‘ ved, may haply never breathe
‘ upon thee again, but leave thee
‘ to be hardened in thy sins; but
‘ if observed and obeyed, thou

‘ shalt be sure to have it thy mo-
 ‘ nitor and director, upon all occa-
 ‘ sions; when thou goest out, it
 ‘ will lead thee, when thou
 ‘ sleepest, it will keep thee, and
 ‘ when thou awakest, it will talk
 ‘ with thee.’

*Of the vicissitude of temporal enjoy-
 ments and of his own experience
 thereof, he gives a striking testi-
 mony in the following lines.*

I Have, in my course of life, had
 as many stations and places of
 habitation as most men. I have
 been in almost continual motion;
 and altho', of all earthly things,

I have the most desired rest, retiredness, and a fixed private station, yet the various changes that I have seen and found, the public employments, that, without my seeking, and against my inclination, have been put upon me, and many other interventions, as well private as public, have made it literally my experience, that I have had no continuing city, or place of habitation. When I had designed unto myself a settled mansion in one place, and had fitted it to my convenience and repose, I have been presently constrained, by my necessary employments, to leave it and repair to another : and when again I had

thoughts to find repose there, and had again fitted it to my convenience; yet some other necessary occurrences have diverted me from it; and thus, by several vicissitudes, my dwellings have been like so many inns to a traveller, though of some longer continuance, yet almost of equal instability and vicissitude. This unsettledness of station, though troublesome, yet hath given me a good and practical moral; namely, that I must not expect my rest in this lower world, but must make it as the place of my journey and pilgrimage, not of my repose and rest, but must look further for

that happiness. And truly, when I consider, that it hath been the wisdom of God Almighty to exercise those worthies, which he left as patterns to the rest of mankind, with this kind of discipline in the world, I have reason not to complain of it, as a difficulty, or an inconvenience, but to be thankful to him for it as an instruction and document, to put me in remembrance of a better home, and to incite me to make a due provision for it; even that everlasting rest which he hath provided for them that love him; and by pouring me thus from vessel to vessel, to keep me from fixing myself too much upon this

world below. But the truth is, did we consider this world as becomes us, even as wise men, we may easily find, without the help of any such particular discipline of this nature, that this world below, neither was intended for, nor indeed can be, a place of rest, but only a kind of laboratory to fit and prepare the souls of the children of men, for a better and more abiding state; a school, to exercise and train us up in habits of patience and obedience, till we are fitted for another station; a little narrow nursery, wherein we may be dressed and pruned, till transplanted into a

better paradise. The continual troubles and discomposures, sicknesses, and calamities, that attend our lives ; the shortness and continued vexations occurring in them ; and finally, the common examples of death and mortality of all ages, sexes, and conditions of mankind ; are a sufficient instruction to convince reasonable men, who have the seriousness and patience to consider and observe, that we have no abiding city here. And on the other side, if we will give ourselves but the leisure to consider the great wisdom of Almighty God, who orders every thing in the world to ends suitable and proportionable ; the

excellence of the soul and mind of man; the great advances and improvements his nature is capable of; the admirable means, which the merciful and wise God hath afforded mankind, by his works of nature and providence, by his word and instruments, to qualify him for a nobler life than this world below can yield, we shall readily confess, that there is another state, another city to come, | which it becomes every good, and wise, and considerate man, to look after, and fit himself for. And yet, if a man look upon the generality of mankind, with a due consideration, they will appear to be like a company of distempered

people. The greatest part of them make it their whole business, to provide for a rest and happiness in this world, they make these vain acquisitions of wealth and honour, and the preferments, and pleasures of this world ; their great, if not their only, business and happiness; and, which is yet a higher degree of frenzy, they esteem this the only wisdom, and judge the careful provision for eternity, the folly of a few weak, melancholy, fanciful men : whereas it is a truth, and in due time it will most evidently appear, that those men, who are most solicitous for the attaining of their everlasting rest, are the only true wise men, and

so shall be acknowledged by those
that now despise them. Wis. 5.4.

“ We fools accounted his life
“ madness, and his end to be
“ without honour. How is he
“ numbered among the children
“ of God, and his lot is among the
“ saints!”

*A LETTER from JAMES EARL of
MARLBOROUGH, a little before
his death, in the battle at sea on
the coast of HOLLAND, &c.*

I Believe the goodness of your
nature, and the friendship
you have always born me, will
receive with kindness the last
office of your friend. I am in

health enough of body, and, through the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, well disposed in mind. This I premise, that you may be satisfied, that what I write proceeds not from any fantastic terror of mind, but from a sober resolution of what concerns myself, and an earnest desire to do you more good after my death, than my example (God of his mercy pardon the badness of it !) in my life-time may do you harm. I will not speak aught of the vanity of this world : your own age and experience will save that labour ; but there is a certain thing that goeth up and down the world, called religion, dressed, and pretended

fantastically, and to purposes bad enough, which yet, by such evil dealing, loseth not its being. The great good God hath not left it without a witness, more or less, sooner or later, in every man's bosom, to direct us in the pursuit of it, and for the avoiding of those inextricable disquisitions and entanglements with which our own frail reason would perplex us. God, in his infinite mercy, hath given us his holy word, in which, as there are many things hard to be understood, so there is enough plain and easy, to quiet our minds, and to direct us concerning our future being. I confess to God and you, I have been a great neglecter,

and, I fear, despiser of it; God, of his infinite mercy, pardon me the dreadful fault! But, when I retired myself from the noise and deceitful vanity of the world, I found no true comfort in any other resolution, than what I had from thence; I commend, from the bottom of my heart, the same to your, I hope, happy use. Dear Hugh, let us be more generous than to believe we die as the beasts that perish; but with a Christian, manly, brave resolution, look to what is eternal. I will not trouble you farther. The only great and holy God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, direct you to an happy end of

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your life, and send us a joyful
resurrection. So prays your true
friend,

MARLBOROUGH.

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CONCLUSION.

SINCE therefore, “ we are encompassed with so great
“ a cloud of witnesses, let us lay
“ aside every weight and burden,
“ and the sin and vanities that do
“ so easily beset us; and, with a
“ constant holy patience, run our
“ race, having our eye fixed upon
“ Jesus Christ, the author and
“ finisher of our faith, not mind-
“ ing what is behind:” so shall
we be delivered from every snare.

No temptations shall gain us,
no frowns shall turn us from
Christ’s cross, and our blessed
self-denial. And although we

may meet with difficulties on our journey and have to taste of some bitter cups; yet we shall be refreshed, at seasons, with a brook by the way; and, if we continue faithful, shall be abundantly recompenced, at last, for all our sufferings, by the gracious rewards of a glorious and happy immortality,

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AN
APPENDIX,
CONTAINING
SOME EXTRACTS
FROM THE WRITINGS OF
PIOUS and EMINENT MEN,
AGAINST THE
ENTERTAINMENTS of the STAGE,
AND OTHER
VAIN AMUSEMENTS.

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An APPENDIX,
CONTAINING
SOME EXTRACTS, &c.

From the truly great PASCAL.

THERE is nothing more capable of letting us into the knowledge of human misery, than an enquiry after the real cause of that perpetual hurry and confusion, in which we pass our lives.

The soul is sent into the body, to be the sojourner of a few days. She knows that this is but a stop, till she may embark for eternity; and that a small space is allowed her to prepare for the voyage.

The main part of this space is ravished from her by the necessities of nature ; and but a slender pittance left to her own disposal : And yet this moment which remains, does so strangely oppress and perplex her, that she only studies how to lose it : She feels an intolerable burthen, in being obliged to live with herself, and think of herself ; and therefore, her principal care is to forget herself, and to let this short and precious moment pass away without reflection, by amusing herself with things which prevent her notice of its speed.

This is the ground of all the tumultuary business, of all the

trifling diversions amongst men ; in which our general aim is to make the time pass off our hands without feeling it, or rather without feeling ourselves ; and, by getting rid of this small portion of life, to avoid that inward disgust and bitterness, which we should not fail to meet with, if we found leisure to descend into our own breasts.

————— Having no infallible remedy against ignorance, misery, and death, we imagine that, at least, some respite, some shelter may be found, by agreeing to banish them from our meditation. This is the only comfort that mankind have been able to invent

under their numerous calamities. But a most miserable comfort it proves, because it does not tend to the removal of these evils, but only to the concealment of them for a short season ; and because, in thus concealing them, it hinders us from applying such proper means as would remove them. Thus by a strange revolution in the nature of man, that grief and inward disquiet which he dreads as the greatest of sensible evils, is, in one respect, his greatest good, because it might contribute, more than all things besides, to the putting of him in a successful method of recovery. On the other hand, his diversions, which

he seems to prize as his sovereign good, are indeed his greatest evil, because, of all things, they are the most effectual in making him negligent under his distemper; they do but amuse and beguile him; and, in the conclusion, lead him down blindfold into the grave.— It is indeed one of the miracles of Christianity, that by reconciling man to God, it restores him to his own good opinion; that it makes him able to bear the sight of himself; and, in some cases, renders solitude and silence more agreeable than all the intercourse and action of mankind. Nor is it by fixing man in his own person, that these wonderful effects are

produced ; 'tis by carrying him to God, and supporting him under a sense of his miseries, with the hopes of an assured and complete deliverance in a better life.

From the PRINCE of CONTI.

‘ It is impossible to consider, the business of a player, and to compare it with the Christian, profession, without being sensible that there is nothing more unworthy of a child of God, and of a member of Jesus Christ than this employment. I do not speak of the gross irregularities only, and the dissolute

manner in which the women appear on the Stage, because those who justify plays, always separate those sort of disorders from them in their imagination, though they are never separated in effect. I speak only of that which is absolutely inseparable from them. 'Tis an employment, the end of which is the diversion of others; where men and women appear on a Theatre, to represent the passions of Hatred, Anger, Ambition, Revenge, and chiefly that of Love. They must express them as livelily, and as naturally, as is possible for them; and they cannot do so, if they do not, in

some manner, excite them in themselves, and if their souls do not take all the changes which we see in their faces. Those then who represent a passion, must be, in some measure, touched with it whilst they represent it; and it is not to be imagined, that they can presently efface from their minds that impression, which they have voluntarily excited in it, and that it does not leave a great disposition to that same passion which they have been so willingly sensible of. Thus, plays are, even in their nature, a school and an exercise of vice, since it is an art in which one must necessarily excite in

himself vicious passions. And if we consider that the whole life of players is employed in this exercise, that they pass it entirely, either in learning by themselves, or rehearsing among one another, or in representing to spectators, the image of some vice; and that they have scarce any thing in their minds but these follies; we shall easily see, that it is impossible to join this employment with the purity of our religion. And thus, it must be owned, it is a prophane employment, and unworthy of a Christian; and that, by consequence, it is not allowable for

others to contribute to maintain them in a profession contrary to Christianity, or to authorize it by their presence.'

—————'Those deceive themselves extremely, who think that plays make no ill impression on them, because they do not find them excite any formed evil desire.————There are many degrees before one comes to an entire corruption of mind, and it is always extremely hurtful to the soul, to destroy the ramparts which secured it from temptation.

'One does not begin to fall when the fall becomes sensible;

the fallings of the soul are slow, they have progressions and preparations; and it often happens, that we are overcome by temptations only by our having weakened ourselves in occasions, which seemed of no importance; it being certain, that he who despises little things, shall fall by little and little.'

—————'It must not be imagined that these wicked maxims, of which plays are full, are not hurtful, because people do not go there to form their sentiments, but to divert themselves; for they do not fail of mak-

ing impressions, notwithstanding, without being perceived; and a gentleman will more sensibly resent an affront, and be the more easily transported to avenge it in the criminal manner which is common in France, when he has heard such sort of verses recited; the reason of which is, that our passions are excited by the objects, and the false opinions with which the mind is prepossessed. The opinion that the chimera of honour is so great a good, that it must be preserved, even at the expence of life, is what produces the brutal rage of the gentlemen of France. If those who

fight a duel were never spoken of but as fools and madmen, as indeed they are; if that phantom of honour, which is their idol, was never represented but as a chimera and a folly; if care was taken never to form any image of revenge, but as of a mean and cowardly action; the resentment which men feel upon an affront would be infinitely weaker; but that which exasperates and renders it the more lively, is the false impression, that there is cowardice in bearing an affront. Now, it cannot be denied, that plays, which are full of these evil maxims, do greatly contribute to fortify that impression,

because the mind being by them transported, and entirely out of itself, instead of correcting those sentiments, abandons itself to them without resistance, and delights to feel the motions they inspire, which dispose it to produce the like upon occasion.'

'Plays and romances not only indispose the soul for all acts of religion and piety; but they give it a disgust, in some measure, of all serious and ordinary actions. As nothing is represented in them but gallantries, or extraordinary adventures, and the discourses are far distant from such as are used in serious affairs,

one insensibly takes from them a romantic disposition of mind; the head is filled with heroes and heroines, and women seeing the adorations which in them are given to their sex, (of which they find the image and practice in companies of diversion, where young men talk to them what they have learned in romances, treating them as nymphs and goddesses) imprint that sort of life so much in their fancy, that the little affairs of their family and housewifery become insupportable to them; and when they return to their houses, with minds thus evaporated and filled with these follies, they find

every thing there disagreeable, and especially their husbands, who, being taken up with their affairs, are not always in the humour of paying them those ridiculous complaisances which are given to women in plays, in romances, and in the romantic life.'

— 'The need which men have of diversion, is not by far so great as is thought, and it consists more in imagination, or in custom, than in a real necessity. Those who are employed in bodily labour, have only need of a bare cessation from it. Those who are employed in affairs toilsome to the mind,

and but little laborious to the body, have need to recollect themselves from that disposition which those sort of employments naturally cause, and not to dissipate themselves yet more, by diversions which extremely engage the mind. 'Tis a jest to fancy that one has need to pass three hours in filling the mind with follies at a play. Those who find in themselves this need, ought to look on it, not as a natural weakness, but as a vice of custom, which they must cure by serious employments.'

————— 'If the soul abandons
itself to these false pleasures, it

immediately loses the relish of spiritual ones, and finds nothing but disgust for the word of God. These are those four grapes, of which the prophet says, "They benumb, and set on edge, the teeth of those who eat them"—

Jer. 30. 31.—That is to say, when one feeds himself with the vain pleasures of the world, the spiritual senses become stupified, and incapable of relishing, or understanding, the things of God. Now, among the pleasures of the world, which extinguish the love of the word of God, it may be said, that plays and romances hold the first rank; because there is nothing more

opposed to truth, and that the Spirit of God, being a spirit of truth, can have no part with the vanities of the world.'

'There will be many persons ready to assert, that they have never received any ill impression from comedy; but I maintain, either that they are very few in number, or that they are not sincere, or that they have not reflected enough on themselves to perceive it, or else, that the only reason why comedy has not corrupted their manners, is, because it found them already corrupted,

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and that they had left it nothing to do in this matter.'

'God does not impute to us the coldness which proceeds from the withdrawing of his light, or merely from the heaviness of this body; but, no doubt, he imputes to us that, to which we have contributed, by our negligence, and our vain diversions. It is his will that we should esteem nothing so much as the gracious gift, which he has made us of his love, and that we should be careful to preserve it by giving it nourishment. This command he has made to all Christians in the per-

sons of the priests of the ancient law, whom he ordains always to maintain the fire on the altar, and to take care to put wood upon it, every day in the morning. This altar is the heart of man, and every Christian is the priest, who ought to be careful to nourish the fire of charity on the altar of his heart, by putting wood every day upon it ; that is to say, maintaining it by the meditation of divine things, and by exercises of piety. Now, if those who go to plays have yet any sense of piety, they cannot disown that plays deaden, and entirely extinguish devotion ; so

that, they should not doubt, God judges them extremely guilty, for having made so little account of his love, that instead of nourishing and endeavouring to augment it, they have not feared to extinguish it by their vain diversions; and that he will impute to them as a great sin, the abatement or the loss of their love to him. For if a dissipation of the goods of the world, and of earthly riches, by luxury and gaming, is no little sin, what must be judged of a dissipation of the goods of grace, and of that precious treasure the scripture speaks of, which we ought to purchase, by the loss of

all the goods, and all the pleasures of this life."

From CHIEF JUSTICE HALE.

' Beware of too much recreation. Some bodily exercise is necessary, for sedentary men especially; but let it not be too frequent, nor too long. Gaming, taverns, and plays, as they are pernicious, and corrupt youth, so, if they had no other fault, they are justly to be declined, in respect of their excessive expence of time, and habituating men to idleness and vain

thoughts, and disturbing passions and symptoms, when they are past, as well as while they are used.'

CLARKE, in his essay on Study, speaking of plays and romances, says, ' By what I have seen of them, I believe, they are generally very indiscreetly and foolishly written, in a way proper to recommend vanity and wickedness, rather than discredit them; they have a strong tendency to corrupt and debauch the mind with silly, mischievous, notions of love and honour, and other things relating to the conduct of life.'

ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON, mentioning plays, says, ‘They are intolerable, and not fit to be permitted in a civilized, much less a Christian nation; they do most notoriously minister to vice and infidelity. By their profaneness, they are apt to instil bad principles into the minds of men, and to lessen that awe and reverence which all men ought to have of God and religion; and by their lewdness, they teach vice, and are apt to infect the minds of men, and dispose them to lewd and dissolute practices.’—AND

Again, ‘Some parents are such monsters, as not “to know how “to give good things to their

“ children ; but instead of bread
“ give them a stone ; instead of a
“ fish give them a serpent ; in-
“ stead of an egg give them a
“ scorpion,” as our Saviour ex-
presseth it.

‘ These are evil indeed, who
train up their children for ruin
and destruction. Who, instead of
‘ teaching them the fear of the
Lord,’ infuse into them the prin-
ciples of Atheism, irreligion, and
profaneness; instead of teaching
them to love and reverence reli-
gion, they teach them to hate and
despise it, and to make a mock of
both sin and holiness; instead of
training them up in the know-
ledge of the holy scriptures,

which are able to make men wise unto salvation, they allow them to profane that holy book, and to abuse the word of God, which they ought to tremble at, by turning it into jest and railery; instead of teaching them to pray and bless the name of God, they allow them to blaspheme that great and terrible name, and to profane it, by their continual oaths and imprecations; and instead of bringing them to God's church, they carry them to play-houses, and places of debauchery, those schools and nurseries of lewdness and vice.'

*The following are taken from the
Works of WILLIAM LAW.*

‘**C**AN any one thing that he has a true Christian spirit, that his heart is changed as it ought to be, whilst he is diverting himself with the polished lewdness, profaneness, and impure discourses of the stage? Can he think that he is endeavouring to be holy, as Christ is holy, to live by his wisdom, and be full of his spirit, so long as he allows himself in such entertainments? For there is nothing in the nature of Christian holiness, but what is contrary to the spirit and temper of these diversions.’

‘ You own that God has called you to great purity of conversation; that you are forbid all *foolish discourse*, and *filthy jestings*, as expressly as you are forbid swearing; and that you are told to *let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth*; and yet you go to a house of corrupt communication: you hire persons to entertain you with ribaldry, profaneness, rant, and impurity of discourse, who are to present you with poisonous sentiments, and lewd imaginations, dressed up in elegant language, and to make wicked, vain, and impure discourse more lively and delightful, than you could pos-

sibly have it in any ill company. Is not this finning with a high hand, and grossly offending against the plainest doctrines of scripture ?

‘ As prejudices, the force of education, the authority of numbers, the way of the world, the example of great names, may make people believe, so the same causes may make people act, against all sense and reason, and be guilty of practices which are utterly inconsistent with the purity of their religion.’

‘ The pleasures and diversions of people are certain

means for judging of the state of their minds ; nothing can please or affect us, but what is according to our nature, and which finds something within us that is suitable to itself. Had we not inward dispositions of tenderness and compassion, we should not find ourselves softened with miserable objects. In like manner, had we not in our nature lively seeds of those disorders which are acted upon the stage ; were there not some inward corruption that finds itself gratified, by the irregular passions that are there represented, we should find no more pleasure in the stage

than blind men find in pictures.

—If impure speeches, if wanton amours, if wild passions, and immoral rant, can give us any delight, is it not past all doubt, that we have something of all these disorders in our nature?' *and that we nourish and strengthen them by those gratifications ?*

————— ' There is no doctrine of our blessed Saviour, that more concerns all Christians, or is more essential to their salvation, than this : ' " blessed are the " pure in heart, for they shall see " God." ' Now take the stage in its best state, when some admired tragedy is upon it ; are the extra-

vagant passions of distracted lovers, the impure ravings of inflamed heroes, the joys and torments of love, and refined descriptions of lusts; are the indecent actions, the amorous transports, the wanton address of the actors, which make so great a part of the most sober and modest tragedies; are these things consistent with this Christian doctrine of purity of heart?'

————— ' All people who enter into these houses of entertainment, or contribute the smallest mite towards them, must look on themselves, as having been, so

far, friends to the most powerful instruments of sensuality, and to be guilty of contributing to an open and public exercise of splendid impurity and profaneness. When we encourage any good design, either with our consent, our money, or presence, we are apt to take a great deal of merit to ourselves; we presently conclude that we are partakers of all that is good and praise-worthy in it, of all the benefit that arises from it, because we are contributors towards it. A man does not think that he has no share in some public charity, because he is but one in ten thousand that contributes towards it, (*or because it would go*

forward without his contribution); but if it be a religious charity, and attended with great and happy effects, his conscience tells him, that he is a sharer of all that great good to which he contributed. Now, let this teach us, how we ought to judge of the guilt of encouraging any thing that is bad, either with our consent, our money, or our presence. We must not consider how much our single part contributes towards it, how much less we contribute than several thousands of other people, *nor that the work would go forward if we did not at all contribute to it*; but we must

look at the whole thing in itself, and whatever there is of evil in it, or whatever evil arises from it, we must charge ourselves with a share of the whole guilt of so great an evil.'

‘ People of fashion and quality have great advantage above the vulgar ; their condition and education give them a liveliness and brightness of parts, from whence one might justly expect a more exalted virtue. How comes it then, that we see as ill morals, as little religious wisdom, and as great disorders among them, as among the most rude, uneducated part of the world ? It is because

the politeness of their lives, their course of diversions and amusements, and their ways of spending their time, as much extinguish the wisdom and light of religion, as the grossness and ignorance of the dullest part of the world.—Any way of life that darkens our minds, that misemploys our understanding, that fills us with a trifling spirit, that disorders our passions, that separates us from the spirit of God, is the same certain road to destruction, whether it arises from stupid sensuality, rude ignorance, or polite pleasures. Had any one, therefore, the power of an apostle, or the tongue of an angel, it would be well employed, in exposing,

and diffuading from, those ways of life, which wealth, corruption, and politeness, have brought among us. We indeed only call them diversions ; but they do the whole work of idolatry and infidelity, and fill people with so much blindness and hardness of heart, that they neither live by wisdom, not feel the want of it, but are content to play away their lives with scarce any attention to the approaching scenes of death, judgment, and eternity.'

IT must appear evident, to every sober and unprejudiced mind, that the sentiments of these virtuous and enlightened men, against such dangerous ways of spending our time, are, indeed, solid and awakening truths. Let us, therefore, as rational beings, as Christians, who are travelling towards a better country, and who are called to renounce the vanities of this perishing world, assert the dignity of our nature, and act conformably to the excellence of our destination. A few fleeting years will bring us all to the verge of an awful scene, where, the vain diversions and pastimes of this, will appear in their true light, a most lamentable abuse of that pre-

cious time and talent, with which we have been entrusted, for the great purpose of working out our souls salvation. At that solemn period, the great business of religion, a pious and virtuous life, dedicated to the love and service of God, will appear of inestimable value, and the only thing worthy the pursuit of reasonable beings. Happy therefore will it be for us, if we become wise in time, take up the cross to all ensnaring pleasures, for the few remaining days of our lives, and steadily persevere, under the Divine aid, in fulfilling the various duties assigned us, and in making suitable returns to the Author of all good, for the unmerited blessings which he

has abundantly poured forth upon us. In these exalted employments, we shall experience the noblest pleasure, and feel no want of empty and injurious entertainments, to occupy our minds, or fill up our time. We shall abhor the pretence of acquiring moral and refined sentiments, from such polluted mixtures, and feel ourselves deeply concerned to discountenance, by our example and influence, those splendid engines of impiety and dissipation.

THE END.

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